CHASING SHADOWS IN LADAKH

CHASING SHADOWS IN LADAKH

B. L. KAK



LIGHT & LIFE PUBLISHERS

NEW DELHI JAMMU ROHTAK

First Edition : 1978



LIGHT & LIFE PUBLISHERS
2428, Tilak Street, Paharganj, New Delhi-110055
Residency Road, Jammu Tawi-180001 (J & K)
Delhi Road, Rohtak-124001 (Haryana)

Published by N. Gopinath for Light & Life Publishers and Printed at Cosmos Enterprises, Gali Magazine, Churiwalan, Delhi-110006.

PREFACE

More perhaps has been written and much more has been said about Ladakh than about any other high-altitude region of India. And yet the region of Ladakh, known as the Buddhist Wonderland of sand and stone, offers a lot for writers and historians.

True, adequate attention has been paid by travellers and scholars to ancient and early medieval Ladakh; how the region came to be regarded important politically and strategically after the partition of India in 1947 has also been touched upon by some writers in recent years. But some important social, political, administrative and defence matters of the region before and after the fall of Tibet were not made the subject of any comprehensive study. When I make a reference to these matters, I have in view many a change having taken place in the behaviour of Ladakhis, in political and social spheres, in India's defence shield, and in the attitudes of China and Pakistan across the borders of Ladakh.

I have described some political happenings in Kashmir to show how they influenced certain trends in Ladakh and behaviour of Ladakhi leaders. I have made frequent references to Kushak Bakula's interest and anxiety and attitude and approach not to say that he is a great pick-me-up for Ladakh, but to explain that the real hunger of the Buddhists, by and large, is for political power. Complaints about share in services, recruitment and development are merely symptoms of the underlying malaise. Unable to adequately share power, dominant opinion in the Buddhist homeland has been campaigning for the grant of a Union Territory status to Ladakh.

In the present study I have attempted to describe not only the political events, but also the religious institutions and the social and economic life. This volume tries to serve two purposes. It aims to pull together in the compass of a short volume what I gathered about the standpoint of Buddhist and Muslim leaders of Ladakh on the region's future political set up, about the attitudes of the two major communities towards each other, and about Communist China after the capture of Tibet by Mao's Red Army; and it aims to assist in knowing of, though briefly, Peking's intentions and its ability to achieve them.

B. L. KAK

PREFACE

More perhaps has been written [illegible]

[illegible]

CONTENTS

Chapter 1

A mixture of infinite patience, informality, friendliness and just a touch of resignation are, indeed, some of the qualities that constitute a girl serving in any capacity in the areas located at elevations of 11,500 to 15,000 feet above the sea level. Her homeland has followed a peculiar course in the evolution of people's habits and customs and the formation of their manners. She is cheerful, willing and good-tempered. Men, too, in these areas are often ready for a laugh. They are not quarrelsome; they are helpful and, by and large, simple and truthful. Men and women, inhabiting the elevated tablelands, have built a community different altogether from other communities. In other words, they belong to the Buddhist homeland—a mountain-locked territory situated in the east of Kashmir.

At dizzy, difficult height of the tablelands in the Buddhist homeland of sand and stone, it is, according to an ancient account, impossible even for angels to breathe again or freely. But for the people, the brooding and inert mountains looming over the areas they live in, whistling winds blowing chillingly with the onset of dusk and lonely desolation of their surroundings do not tell upon their energy and enthusiasm. The people are considered to be one of the hardiest of races. The men average five feet three inches in height, where as one can give

nearly four feet nine inches as the height of the women. The people of the Buddhist wonderland have the Turanian cast of feature. According to a tradition, the present population is the result of a long process of blending of at least three distinct peoples, two of whom belonged to the Aryan stock and the third to the Mongolian race. The Aryas have been the Dards of Gilgit and Mons of North-India, presumably from Kashmir, who have left a deep impression on the art, literature and culture of the land.

The Mongolian stock is traced to Tibet. From Tibet shepherds and nomads came to the plains of the Buddhist homeland to graze their flocks. And when one talks about the Turanian cast of feature—that which one is apt to call Chinese—many Ladakhi Buddhists have it in an unmistakable form. The cheekbones are high; the chin is small and usually retreats. A striking peculiarity is that of the eyes, of which the outer corners are drawn out and the upper eyelids are overhung by a fold of the skin above. The nose is pressed into face; and it is often depressed at the bridge. The mouth is slightly large and inexpressive.

The women of the Buddhist tablelands enjoy complete social liberty; they go about unveiled and know no social taboo. One cannot come across any kind of inhibition or even subdued expression of discontent when the women mix where men frequent and enter with them into their pursuits of business or pleasure. A number of ladies, especially in the town of Leh, seem to have advanced during the last one decade. Some of them dirty-joke-telling, unshockable, chang-drinking women who live almost exclusively in a world of men. To a native of the rest of India the social freedom enjoyed by the Buddhist women seems quite strange. But the reality remains that the Buddhist women consider themselves completely free and responsive to more social liberty.

There is among the Buddhist women, especially between 15 and 35, unambiguous willingness to co-operate with their friends and admirers and even strangers in every possible way. Possessed with a good habit of assisting the needy, these women make

their guests quite comfortable. A bit of business, if involved by the women in one form or the other, should not astonish non-Ladakhis inasmuch as they do enjoy and appreciate the tinkle and utility of money. Extremely friendly and willing are some of the girls serving in the Chang Gali—a place not far from over a century-old Shankar Gumpa housing the statues of some venerable divines, including a Buddhist deity with 1,000 arms and an equal number of heads. Smaller in size, the Chang Gali has been carved out in Leh, the headquarters of the frontier district of Ladakh. The Chang Gali is not a mountain pass the pilgrims have to cross during their climb to the Shankar Gumpa: it serves as a meeting-place for lovers of chang and its suppliers.

Chang is a cheap beverage made from barley and grim. Though Ladakh gets its full share of sunshine, it has a dry and cold climate which, it is generally believed, induced the Ladakhis to take to chang, a light beer made without hops. As the Ladakhis have no good vessels to keep it in, the chang is usually sour by the time it is drunk. Chang tastes like a cross between home-brewed beer and farm-house cider. Chang is not a bad beverage on a warm day. But the people of Ladakh will enjoy it even in the sub-zero temperature.

The Ladakhis are very social in their habits. Giving of feasts is a common practice among them. Births, marriages and deaths are the principal occasions on which these feasts are held and chang is served. The chief social function is the celebration of the New Year. The Buddhist birth feast is held one week after the mother's confinement when all the relatives assemble at her house. Then there is the naming feast held a year after the child's birth. When the Buddhist monk pronounces a name, the relatives and friends are entertained to dinner. The marriage feast is a much more formal business which lasts several days. So is the case with funeral feasts which vary according to the rank and circumstances of the deceased. When a rich man is dead, a large number of monks gather to recite prayers for days together after which the body is cremated. But on the death of a poor man, only a few monks meet and recite prayers for two or three days while the corpse remains in the

house. The Buddhists follow the Hindu custom of burning in the disposal of their dead. But while the Hindus seldom or never let 24-hour elapse between death and cremation, the Ladakhi Buddhists keep the corpse for many days, feasting their friends round it. If the rank of the deceased person is higher, the longer they keep the body away from fire.

Pattern of relationship between a married son and his parents—father and mother—undergoes a curious change with the arrival of a new face—the daughter-in-law. The married son's father and mother leave their home after they find a rise in their status by becoming grandfather and grandmother of their son's child. They leave their home to give the house and the land to their son. They live in a tiny house nearby with one or two head of cattle and retain just enough land for themselves to attend to and raise food for themselves.

The Buddhists of Ladakh have a rather curious custom of arranging a reception for those to whom they wish to do honour. People of all classes turn out at every inhabited place to greet the leaders and dignatories. The villagers collect at the entrance of the village, with the musicians in attendance playing on flageolet and tom-tom. The women are drawn up in line, each holding a vessel containing either barley-meal or milk or chang or some other article to eat or to drink. Some of the women carry earthen vassels containing "holy and pure" perfume of pencil-cedar.

The people of the Buddhist wonderland profess a faith that teaches "compassion, courtesy and kindness, truthfulness, loyalty, politeness in word, cheerfulness and good humour". The form of Buddhism prevalent in the mountain-locked region is known as Lamaism. Buddhism was first introduced in Ladakh during Asoka's reign. But before that, Bon religion which was a sort of epicureanism based on the doctrine of "eternal annihilation", prevailed in the land. Asoka sent emissaries and monks to spread teachings of Buddha. It was in the middle of seventh century that Buddhism even found its way into Tibet through Ladakh. The basic postulates of the form of Buddhism prevalent in Ladakh and the principles of Tibetan

Lamaism are nearly the same, the people considering Lhasa, the capital of Tibet, as the spiritual home of the Buddhists.

In his travel accounts, Fa-Hien, well-known Chinese pilgrim, who travelled through Ladakh in the year 400 A.D. and spent more than a month in the region, discussed certain aspects of the faith professed by the Ladakhis. Fa-Hien found Buddhism flourishing as the only religion and saw in it nothing that was different from the Buddhism of India, except for the fact that the Ladakhi Buddhists used the prayer-wheel.

In the 13th century, a big change occurred in the cultural life of Ladakh when the then King of the region introduced, for the first time, the practice of deputing Buddhist novices to central Tibet for education. This practice meant the extinction of the Indian forms of Buddhism. From the religious point of view, Ladakh thereafter came in closer touch with Lhasa.

But owing to the cataclysmic changes in Tibet and the Dalai Lama's exit from Lhasa, the situation has changed altogether. Many changes have already occurred in Lhasa and further changes are expected at the instance of China. Accordingly, the Buddhists of Ladakh find it difficult in the given circumstances to look towards Lhasa for religious inspiration. The practice of educating Buddhists novices in Tibet has already stopped. Efforts are, therefore, being made to fill the vacuum in the religious life of the Ladakhis. A college for Buddhist philosophy, which was started in 1959 in Leh, is being developed to make it a bigger institution in accordance with the plan formulated by the Dalai Lama in consultation with some Buddhist leaders, including Kushak Bakula, chief priest of the Spituk monastery of Ladakh and a former Minister and member of Indian Parliament. The plan came to the fore during the Dalai Lama's 19-day visit to Ladakh in August-September 1976. The Dalai Lama has expressed his desire for opening of at least half a dozen schools for Buddhist philosophy in the region of Ladakh by 1983. The Dalai Lama has indicated to the Kushak that he would raise money from different countries, including Sri Lanka, Thailand, Mongolia, Bhutan and

Burma, for running the Buddhist schools in the frontier district.

The Ladakh Buddhist society is not based on any caste system. The priesthood of Lamas does not constitute a caste, since Lamas are made, not born. But in a small way, there is a division among Ladakh Buddhists. A small caste of blacksmiths and musicians exists there with whom other Ladakhis do not intermarry. Perhaps they are the ancient Mons of North-India, who, after being subjugated, were treated as low castes.

There is another division in the Buddhist society. A nomadic people, know as Champas, inhabit the highlands of the region—the Rupshu valley and Changthong. Though they are Buddhists, the Champas do not generally intermarry with other Buddhists. In fact, religion lies light on the Champas and their young men do not become monks.

Elsewhere it is shooting the rapids or tubing the river or allowing the peacock days to stage a comeback to facilitate the spread of new fashions. But in the east of Kashmir—that is Ladakh—the current haute-couture among youngsters could not do away with "La-pa-sha", the Tibetan word for the Ladakhi cloak. A thing of the past, refusing to indicate clearly how old it is even when ancient documents on Ladakh are gone through, "La-pa-sha" has come to occupy an important place in the social life of the people inhabiting "Ka-chan-pa" (snowland) which, in Tibetan termidology, is also called "La-tags". Judged from the passing references of some ancient travellers to the use of "La-pa-sha", it is easier to record that the introduction of the Ladakhi cloak goes back several centuries.

Demonstrative efforts by many a Ladakhi to ring in the new and ring out the old since the trans-Himalayan region threw itself open to the outside world after the Chinese invasion in 1962, have brought about many a change in the ancient structure of the Ladakh society; they have failed to replace the traditional Ladakhi cloak by a modern outfit with the design of long coats used in Kashmir or elsewhere in India. Numerous

indeed, are the tradition-ridden Ladakhis who are averse to any external influence aimed at involving internal expression for changing certain local characteristics of dress and religion, if not the mode of living. Although the presence of about 2,000 Kashmiris working in the border district in various institutions and offices has drawn the attention of some of those opposed to see non-Ladakhis reaping where they have not sown, the Ladakhis have no objection when they find several Kashmiris in the frontier tahsils of Leh and Kargil using "La-pa-sha".

Apart from the fact that a Ladakhi cloak, used by a Kashmiri serving in the Buddhist homeland, is an effective winter outfit against the freezing cold, "La-pa-sha" is preferred rather than using any other garment as, to the Kashmiris and Ladakhis, it is a cover under which even dirty clothes can remain concealed. Tweed is generally used for making "La-pa-sha".

In several villages of Ladakh with annoying scarcity of water, people seldom wash the cloaks and hardly take a bath. One really does not know the exact number of villagers who can anticipate dangerous consequences from the accumulated dirt. Judged from the outbreak of smallpox in Ladakh in 1834 with such fatal virulence that about 14,000 persons were carried off, the mortal effect of such a contagious disease cannot be wondered at amongst filthy people, most of them living in the elevated tablelands, who never wash and only change their garments when the cloth has finished piecemeal off their persons.

"La-pa-sha" is an indispensable winter outfit for every Ladakhi. As the climate of the region is characterised by great extremes of heat and cold and by excessive dryness, the Ladakhi cloak is in use, almost throughout the year, in a number of villages beyond the two towns of Leh and Kargil. While the men of Ladakh wear woollen "La-pa-sha" and cover their heads either with quilted skull-caps or caps of sheep-skin with a large flap behind, the women generally use black or brown woollen jackets with large stripped petticoats of many colours. Many, indeed, are the Ladakhi females, including the dancing-women, who use long gowns instead of the

jacket and petticoat and cover their heads with a coloured, quilted skull-cap or with a circular, flat-topped, stiff woollen hat.

Contact between Ladakhi businessmen and those exporting various items of daily use of dress to Ladakh, is undoubtedly an important factor responsible for having created new tastes for colour and costume among the youngsters there. It is true that many Ladakhi girls have, of late, become more fashionable. But their love for the traditional garment, "La-pa-sha", has not abated; all that one can see is that, in certain cases, the cloak for women is either made of fine cloth or embellished with embroidery. In recent years (1965-75 decade) several Ladakhi girls were presented with colourful, embroidered gowns after their marriage with non-Ladakhis, some of whom have already decided to settle in the Buddhist homeland, presumably with an idea of making their partners realise that the proof of the pudding is in the eating.

To the Ladakhi, especially in the upper reaches beyond Leh, his shoes are a matter of much importance. The stony ground, and in winter the piercing cold, need precautions. A piece of thick leather makes the sole, and is moulded round for the sides of the feet as well. A felt or a cloth top is attached to it to make it reach above the ankle; the leg is protected by felt gaiters, secured by a tape wound many times round. The women, too, wear the same sort of shoes as the men.

Some Ladakhi families have begun to make use of Kangri during winter. I was told by two Ladakhi women at Leh in June 1976 that they learnt the art of using a Kangri in the Kashmir valley where they spent two winters before returning to their homeland. These two Ladakhi women, as well as some others, who had also purchased Kangris knew nothing about the results of the excessive use of Kangris. Nor did they know that at least 100 Kashmiris, examined by some medical men in different areas of Kashmir between 1970 and 1975, had been advised to get separated from the Kangri whose excessive use had been the cause of a kind of cancer peculiar to the Valley

of Kashmir. Kangri, consisting of two parts—the inner an earthenware vessel containing fire and the other an encasement of wickerwork—becomes an indispensable part of a Kashmiri's winter outfit.

A survey by the medical men in about 20 areas, especially in Kashmir villages, has led them to collect some samples which, following the laboratory tests, showed a malignant growth. To their horror-filled amazement, the medical men came across a number of people whose thighs and bellies had become almost scorched. The affected parts bore dark patches, the size of a boil, which, when pressed, yielded a watery substance, the colour of pus. Some of the affected people had informed the medical experts that the boil-shaped patches had been with them for years, and the known methods had failed to cure them. The survey provided interesting material for the medical men for further research : it was a sample collected from a middle-aged village women whose womb and the passage leading to it used to indicate abnormal symptoms like swelling, irritation and pain whenever she made the use of Kangri, a portable brazier carrying hot, glowing embers.

Lamas of Ladakh can be easily identified by their dress. Woollen gown or *choga* is their dress. The *choga* is dyed either red or yellow according to the sect they belong to. Lamas belonging to the red sect constitute an overwhelming majority over the yellow-sect monks. They shave their heads, and most of them go without a covering. But the Buddhist monks of higher rank wear hats of different designs. Lamas very commonly carry in their hands a small prayer-cylinder. This instrument is devised in such a manner that its handle is turned by the force given to a bullet attached to it by a little chain. The Buddhists believe that the turning of a prayer-cylinder is equivalent for them to saying one's prayers or telling one's beads.

A Lama has manifold functions : he learns to read and write; he has to learn to patter charms and to intone the Buddhist scriptures—the Tengyur and Kangyr ; he learns the ritua

of the services and to play the religious instruments; he is taught how to make the ceremonial offerings of chang and barley, to the pyramids of butter and parched grain on festival days and the art of reading horoscopes and selecting auspicious day for wedding and names for children.

All Lamas do not necessarily live in monasteries, which are known as Gumpas. Some of them live in villages and take part in the tilling of fields and other work connected with the daily life of the monastery. As monks they observe 250 odd vows, including that of celibacy. In recent years, however, a few Lamas and the head priest of Pheyang Gumpa, Kushak Tugden, held the stick from a different end : they loved—indeed, contrary to the convention of celibacy—to have female partners for the pursuits of pleasure. In nearly every village is a monastery of greater or less importance. Thirty of the major monasteries and several hundred smaller ones are located atop mountains which are not easy to climb. In the past nearly every family in Ladakh had at least one representative in the monastery. Those were the days when in every home one saw a boy wearing a Lama's cap or a little girl with the cap of a Choma nun.

But now, according to one estimate, the number of Lamas does not exceed 4,000. This constitutes less than eight per cent of the Buddhist population in the region. The number of nuns has also declined in spite of the existence of nunneries in the neighbourhood of the monasteries. Like the Lamas, the nuns also belong to either the red or the yellow sect. The yellow-sect Chomos are more respected than the nuns professing the red-sect tenets.

Though many of the monasteries are in a state of neglect, it is a fact that the Buddhist Gumpas appear to be the most conspicuous buildings in the region. They are generally somewhat apart from the houses of the village. Their walls are built of stone masonry and they are raised on steep cliffs. Prayer-cylinders are fixed at the entrance of Gumpas. Prayer-cylinders are sometimes placed in continual motion by water-

power. In Nubra, far from Leh, a cylinder, four feet in diametre and six feet in height, has been made to revolve by a stream of water flowing beneath the floor of the room in the monastery against floats attached to a continuation of its upright axle. When you enter a monastery, you find two large rooms, the first containing the Gumpa's library of sacred books and Buddhist texts and second room, known as "Lha Kang" or god's house, houses the images of the Buddhist deities, images of some of their gods, or of Buddha, or of apotheosised Lamas. "Lha Kang" is furnished with different instruments of worship, with bells and lamps, with sceptres and other emblems, and with bags of grain and bowls of butter. Butter is mainly used to keep the wick burning constantly inside the image-room.

Ladakh Gumpa Association has been accused by some Buddhists of being extremely lackadaisical in ensuring maintenance of monasteries other than the twelve Gumpas selected by it for further development. This matter was brought to the notice of the Dalai Lama during his visit to Ladakh in 1976. The Dalai Lama stressed the need for "immediate" measures to preserve and develop all the monasteries and to devise ways and means for increasing the number of Lamas in the region. Of the twelve ancient monasteries, Hemis and Likir Gumpas are the two famous religious institutions with 1,000 monks. Twelve monasteries—Hemis, Alchi, Pheyang, Thicksy, Spituk, Stakna, Chimde, Tak Thok, Lama Yuru, Matho, Likir and Rizong—have about 3,000 monks.

Ladakh Gumpa Association has been of the opinion that these Gumpas have been playing a "notable" role in the maintenance, preservation and propagation of Buddhism in Ladakh for the last over 1,500 years. The Dalai Lama has favoured not only the development of all the existing monasteries but also opening of more monasteries for propagation of Buddhism in the region. The fourteenth spiritual and temporal ruler of the Tibetans sent a word to the management of Ladakh Buddha Vihara, Delhi, towards the end of September 1976, urging it to join hands with him and his associates in giving a fillip to the activity seeking the preservation and development of

Buddhism in Ladakh. A plan, chalked out for development of Buddhist institutions, will also cover at least 35 Ladakh Gumpas, many of whom are in a state of disrepair. The Dalai Lama and Kushak Bakula would welcome assistance from the Government of India for implementation of the plan. "I have been in touch with the Dalai Lama and also with the Government of India on the question of seeking their moral and material support for bringing about a suitable improvement in Ladakh Buddhist society", the Kushak told me in Srinagar in October 1977. The Dalai Lama, he said, had problems of his own. But his interest in "our task of making Ladakh a seat of Buddhistic learning in India" was quite encouraging, the Kushak added.

The Kashmir Government, headed by Sheikh Mohammed Abdullah, approached UNESCO in 1976 for assistance to preserve about five lakh miniature paintings which adorn the walls of five-chamber Alchi monastery in Ladakh. Done by a group of 75 Kashmiri artists during the reign of Ladakhi prince, Rinchen Zampu, in the 10th-11th century, the paintings, after Ajanta, constitute biggest collection of Buddhist frescos in India. Most of the paintings show Buddha in different postures. Lashing rains in Ladakh in the 1975 summer caused much damage to paintings in the Alchi monastery. Some experts, led by Mohammed Yusuf Teng, secretary of the Jammu and Kashmir Academy of Art, Culture and Languages, have warned that the paintings would be completely ruined unless "immediate" steps were taken to preserve "this rare, priceless art-treasure" and restore damaged paintings to their original shape and beauty.

When I met Kushak Bakula in Srinagar in October 1977, I was told that he had approached the Government of India to establish veracity, if any, of a report regarding the discovery in Kashmir of copper plates with engravings relating to the decisions taken by the fourth Buddhist Council in the 2nd century A.D. "It will be of tremendous importance to know the story of the copper plates which are reported to contain 6.6 million canons drawn up at the fourth Buddhist Council",

he said. Mohammed Amin, an employee of the research and old documents' section of the Kashmir archaeological department, is the person who aroused interest of some circles, including Ladakh Buddhist Association, in the subject after claiming to have discovered from the site of stone depository copper plates with engravings pertaining to the decisions taken in Kashmir by the fourth Buddhist Council. He took 45 years to reach the "treasure", situated about 65 kilometres from the capital city of Srinagar towards the south-west. The "treasure", according to him, lies under a huge stone "which cannot be found in any place other than Egypt". All though some research scholars from India, the USA, Japan and France made some attempts, openly and secretly, to induce him to divulge the location of the "treasure", Mohammed Amin was unwilling to disclose the site of stone depository.

It was long before Kushak Bakula expressed his desire to involve the Government of India in this matter that Mohammed Amin told reporters in Srinagar that he reached the "treasure" after inspecting about 500 archaeological sites and monuments located in an area of 2,400 square kilometres in Kashmir. In fact, it was his father, Ghulam Ahmed Mahjoor, a famous Kashmiri poet and historian, who started the search in 1930 after analysing all the historical references. But ten years of his search eluded the copper "treasure". On his death bed the poet had told his son of his hunch that if he visited a particular site, success might crown him. Amin said that after consulting many Kashmiri and foreign experts, including R. C. Kak, Shridhar Kaul, P. N. K. Bamzai, Jean Nodu (French), Han San (American) and Token Somi (Japanese), he began single-handed efforts and was blessed with a statue of smiling Buddha in terracotta which "is the only one of its kind in the world". After some more research, Amin came to the conclusion that the copper plates were under the huge stone.

The old stupa where the prized copper plates are supposed to be buried was mentioned by Hiuen Tsang, the well-known Chinese pilgrim. According to him, the Buddhist Council sat for six months and was attended by only "Arhats"—who

worked for and attained enlightenment. But according to Taranatha (a Tibetan historian), 500 "Bodhisatvas"—who, having attained enlightenment, worked for the deliverance of others—and 500 "Pandits", besides 500 "Arhats", attended the Council. When six-month-long deliberations were completed the commentaries were copied on sheets of copper, which were deposited in a stupa built for this purpose.

Kushak Bakula is simple. He is always prepared to listen to any story, real or imaginary. And the stories on Buddhism, Buddhist relics or ruins arouse his interest and curiousity, too. In October, he and his chief lieutenant, Sonam Wangyal, heard with rapt attention a story of the Buddhist ruins of Kafir Kot in Pakistan. The famous historic ruins of the Hindu and Buddhist periods of Kafir Kot, situated at about 65 kilometres north of Dera Ismail Khan, are fairly widespread, according to M. Aminuddin, a Pakistani journalist. The Buddhist relics of Bilot and Chashma on the eastern end of the Khaisor Range, Aminuddin says, must have once been in full command of the navigational potential of the river Indus. The preliminary excavations carried out by the archaeological department of Pakistan indicated that the Kafir Kot ruins must have been the citadel of a great civilisation dating back to the days of the Indus valley civilisation that perished there some four thousand years ago. Among the numerous monuments and historical landmarks spread over the vast surface of the ancient land steeped in history, tradition, art and culture, the Buddhist relics of Kafir Kot have importance of their own. Pakistan's archaeological department has recognised that during the Buddhist rule in the region, Kafir Kot was a great centre of learning, culture, trade and commerce.

Chapter

2

Although it has shrunk in size as a result of the occupation of a part of its terrltory by China and Pakistan, Ladakh is the biggest district in the State of Jammu and Kashmir. The district contains "a great portion of what is the biggest massif of mountains in the world—the Karakorams". To the south of the Karakorams lies the Ladakh range, the peaks of which tower only some 3,500 feet above the summit of Mont Blanc.

The district of Ladakh is bounded in the north and east by China and the north-west by the area under the occupation of Pakistan. The districts of Baramulla, Srinager, Anantnag and Doda fall towards its west, whereas the southern side is flanked by the states of Punjab and Himachal. The Zojila, serving as the gateway to the trans-Himalayan region, is at the top of the beautiful valley of the Sindh river, a tributary of the Jhelum. A portion of the Himalayas, or the Zanskar range, is the boundary between Himachal and Kashmir. separating two outlying portions of the Kangra district, Lahul and Spiti, from Ladakh. In this section the peaks are from 19,000 to 21,000 feet high, and the Baralacha pass on the road from the Kulu valley in Kangra to Leh is at an elevation of 16,500 feet. The twin peaks called Nun and Kun to the east of Srinagar exceed 23,000 feet, and in the extreme north-west the grand mountain mass

of Nanga Parbat towers above the Indus to a height of 26,182 feet. The lowest point in the chain is the Zojila (11,300 feet) on the route from Srinagar to Leh on the Indus.

If one is asked to survey the frontier region from south to north, one would come across three mountain chains and they contain two great valleys, the Indus and the Shayok, the true floor of Ladakh. In the ridge, separating the upper Shayok from the Nubra river, are great peaks, 25,000 feet high. Among the mountains in the north-west of it are several summits of 25,000 and some even of 26,000 feet. Nubra sector consists of the valley of the Nubra river and a portion of the Shayok river. Bounded by the lofty mountains, the two rivers provide wide alluvial flats. Five names have been given to different parts of Nubra. Gyen is that part of the Shayok valley which lies above the junction of the Shayok and Nubra rivers. Shama is the part of the Shayok valley from the junction downward to the boundary of Baltistan. Tsurka is the valley of the Nubra river below Panimik, on the right bank. Farka is the valley of the Nubra river below Panimik, on the left bank. Yarma is the valley of the Nubra river above Panimik.

The district of Ladakh is cut diagonally by the Indus river believed to be the ninth longest river of the world. From the Kashmir frontier to Haramosh west of Gilgit, it flows steadily to the north-west for about 520 kilometres. A little below Leh the Indus receives the Zanskar river, which drains the south-east of Kashmir. After another 230 kilometres it flows through the basin, in which Skardu, the principal town in Baltistan, is situated. The river rushes down a tremendous gorge, where it appears to break through the western Himalaya, skirts Haramosh, and at a point 40 kilometres east of Gilgit bends abruptly to the south.

For administrative convenience, the district of Ladakh has been divided into three tahsils—Leh, Kargil and Zanskar. While there were only two tahsils—Leh and Kargil—in 1961, Zanskar tahsil came into being during the intercensal period 1961-71. The data collected at the 1971 census under the stewardship of J.N. Zutshi, Director of Census Operations, Jammu & Kashmir,

put the number of villages in the district of Ladakh at 238—Leh tahsil with 109, Kargil tahsil with 104 and Zanskar tahsil with 25 villages. Of 238 villages, 235 are inhabited and 3 uninhabited. Two of the uninhabited villages are situated in the Kargil tahsil, whereas the remaining one falls in the Leh tahsil. The population of the district of Ladakh, according to the data collected at the 1971 census, was 105,291—males numbering 53,315 as against 51,976 females.

Of 105,291 inhabitants, 97,382 lived in the rural areas and 7,909 formed the urban population. Majorlty of villages in the district, as revealed by J.N. Zutshi in September 1974, were medium sized and their population was as high as 80.17 per cent. The classification of villages by area showed that 95 villages or 40.08 per cent were in the area group 201-500 acres, 49 villages or 20.68 per cent in the area range between 501-1,000 acres and 46 or 19.41 per cent between 101 to 200 acres. Director of Census Operations said it was interesting to note that the number of bigger villages with areas ranging between 2,001 to 5,000 acres and 5,001 acres and above was only 7 in the district. Of these, 4 villages were in the area group of 2.001-5,000 and the remaining 3 belonged to area range 5,001 and above. An interesting feature of the newly created tahsil of Zanskar, according to him, is that none of its villages fall in the area size of less than 100 acres or above 1,000 acres. The largest number of villages in this tahsil (16 or 64 per cent) have areas ranging between 201 to 500 acres. Villages with areas 501 to 1,000 number only 6.

Tahsil of Zanskar lies south-west of Leh. Approach to Zanskar is of considerable difficulty as the area is placed in a maze of mountains. By far the greater part of the area is occupied by the ridges and the ravines of mountains. While the climate of Zanskar is severe, the people and the cattle are confined within doors for more than six months soon after winter closes in. Villages of Zanskar are not so comfortable nor so picturesque as those in other parts of Ladakh. The people of Zanskar are old-fashioned, retaining their simplicity of manners and their honesty without stain.

Only Muslims and Buddhists have any substantial following in the towns of the district of Ladakh, their respective number at the 1971 census being 3,888 and 3,427. Muslims and Buddhists which are considered to be the most important religious communities together account for 92.49 per cent of the total urban population in the district. Of the other religions, Hinduism accounted for 453 or 5.73 per cent of the total urban population. The followers of Sikhism and Christianity "are very few". Christianity has numerically the least importance of the five religions found in the urban areas of the district. The Christians in the towns numbered only 43 when the Jammu and Kashmir Census Operations conducted the 1971 census. The number of Sikhs was placed at 98.

The bulk of the Muslims inhabited the town of Kargil where they constitute more than 93 per cent of the total population of the town. Kargil tahsil is inhabited mostly by the Shia sect of Muslims. The influence of the Aghas and the Sheikhs on the Shia society is so strong that the majority of people would rather die than discard spiritual remedies. Allopathic treatment is sought only when the sick or wounded persons become hopeless. Deeply rooted in the past are Shia women. They still wear dark dress and, invariably, hide their hands and faces from sunlight. This habit, coupled with poor nutrition and poorer hygienic sense, drastically lower their resistance to TB. The incidence of TB is high all over the region. Post-natal or pre-natal care is unheard of. What the Aghas and the Sheikhs do to the religion-ridden Shia population of Baltistan territory under the occupation of Pakistan, it is practised on the Muslim population of Kargil tahsil on almost the same line. In other words, the Aghas and the Sheikhs of Kargil sector profit by the people's blissful ignorance. Some of these "demigods" are materially prosperous while quite a few of them take advantage of "mutta" without any restriction. The old Muslim practice of "mutta" (temporary marriage) is common in the region.

The Aghas and the Sheikhs are regarded fountainheads of knowledge and instruments to meet the spiritual and other requirements of the people. The institution of the Aghas and the Sheikhs has refused to develop a crack in spite of some

transformation brought about in the region in social and economic spheres following the 1962 invasion on Ladakh by the Chinese troops. Some of the "demigods" began evincing interest in the ebb and the flow of the State politics from 1964 when Sheikh Abdullah, after his unconditional release, posed a challenge to New Delhi with the cry for grant of right of self-determination to the Kashmiris. The Aghas and Sheikhs of Kargil tahsil could not come out openly to help the Abdullah-backed Plebiscite Front open a branch of the party in Kargil as they lacked courage to do so in view of the measures taken by the authorities against what was described as "undesirable elements". But a section of Ladakh's Muslim population, backed by some "demigods", raised a few thousand rupees, quietly, for the Plebiscite Front. Some Muslims, as revealed through a message sent from Leh to the State Criminal Investigation Department in Srinagar in August 1969, engaged themselves in raising small donations for the Kashmir Awami Action Committee, led by Maulvi Mohammed Farooq. The Maulvi's followers, very small in number, were equally unable to open a branch of the party in the district.

Earlier in October 1968, a couple of Muslim representatives from Ladakh managed to attend the People's Convention convened by Sheikh Abdullah in Srinagar to deliver the "most agreed solution" which could form a basis for talks with New Delhi and, if necessary, with Pakistan also. Almost all the delegates to the 7-day Convention were of the view that the Kashmir problem was much older than the accession issue which cropped up as far ago as 1947. About 60 papers outlining ideas regarding Kashmir's future were read at the Convention. Papers read by the secessionists outnumbered those submitted by individuals or groups with pro-India belief and strategy. Unambiguous proposals and solutions were set forth by pro-India individuals for ending what the secessionists often described as "impasse" on Kashmir. None from the secessionist camp came forward with any clear formula for the Kashmir problem. Majority of secessionists emphasized the need for holding a plebiscite in Kashmir without clearly defining what they meant by a plebiscite. Balraj Puri, chairman of the Jammu Autonomy Forum, was perhaps the only delegate who did not pull the

oars out of water to leave the boat float at will ; he told Sheikh Abdullah and others that by suggesting a plebiscite as a solution "is to evade the issue as it is only a mechanism for ratification or rejection of a solution and cannot be confused with a solution".

Commencement of the People's Convention did not indicate encouraging signs inasmuch as the controversy over Jayaprakash Narayan's inaugural address could not narrow the chasm that divided the Kashmir secessionists and New Delhi into two uncompromising parts. Sheikh Abdullah proved himself jittery over the Sarvodaya leader's contention that "after 1965 conflict, no Government of India can accept a solution that places Kashmir outside the Union of India". The Sarvodaya leader observed that right of self-determination, viewed against the changed background since 1947, needed to be interpreted afresh in keeping with today's need for the people of Kashmir. Generally speaking, Narayan's researches regarding future of Kashmir were characterised by a combination of theoretical and experimental methods of approach, thoroughness and maturity of treatment and elegance in the presentation of results.

It was before the People's Convention was held in Srinagar that some forces began to draw a line between the Buddhists and Muslims of Ladakh on the future political set up of the region. As the slogan, favouring Central administration for Ladakh, was raised occasionally by some Buddhist leaders, including Kushak Bakula, a line came to be drawn between a majority of Buddhist monks and the Muslim leaders, both religious and political. While these monks favoured separation from the control of Kashmir authority, the Muslims had a reason to oppose moves aimed at seeking a division of the State of Jammu and Kashmir on linguistic, regional and communal considerations.

Some Buddhist leaders have several allegations against a section of Muslim religious and political leaders of Ladakh. A Buddhist leader working for the Indian National Congress in Ladakh told S.N. Chopra, an officer of Indian Intelligence

Bureau, in Srinagar in September 1976 that it was "very unfortunate" that New Delhi had refused, or failed, to examine, in depth, the internal situation in Ladakh where "a section of Muslim leaders, some of them either associated with the Congress party or with Sheikh Abdullah's National Conference have been busy building walls between Buddhists and Muslims of the region". Details given by the Buddhist leader to the I.B. official ran thus :

1. "A sample survey made by Ladakh Buddhist Association on marriages between Buddhist girls and Ladakhi Muslims from 1965 to the middle of 1976, showed that nearly 400 Buddhist girls had been induced, if not forced, by a batch of Muslims to get married to Muslim males.

2. "Force was used in case of three to four Buddhist girls. Although these incidents were brought to the notice of concerned authorities, no action was taken.

3. "We have a feeling that encouragement is provided to Muslim males to get married to Buddhist girls with the ostensible purpose of reducing the Buddhist population in the district of Ladakh.

4. "The sample survey also showed that in several Muslim familes, where Buddhist girls have gone as daughters-in-law, practice of giving Buddhist names to new-born children had already become a thing of the past ; it was ensured that a baby born of a Buddhist mother was given only a name proposed by a Muslim priest.

5. "We Buddhists felt very bad when some Muslims fired crackers, or lit lamps with speed, at the time of the matrimonial alliance between a Buddhist girl and a Muslim male.

6. "Another unfortunate development, which occurred in 1975, was the demand made by some Muslims in the region for more concessions to the members of their community in light of the urban population data collec-

ted at the 1971 census. The data placed the number of Muslims at 3,888 as against 3,427 Buddhists. This difference, though very small, was made an issue to exploit sentiments on religious and communal lines.

7. "It was equally unfortunate, and also distressing, to note that Jammu and Kashmir Pradesh Congress Committee made recommendations in 1971-72 urging that, under the Agrarian Reforms Act, one eighth on total produce from the land with the Buddhist monasteries in Ladakh should go to the Government. Ladakh Gumpa Association had every reason to protest against these recommendations in July and August 1972. Mir Qasim, Chief Minister of the Kashmir State, was not happy with the Association for the manner in which it sent a raft of communications to Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister of India, and held out threats, one after another, to launch an agitation against the State PCC recommendations. Mrs. Gandhi's timely intervention saved the situation in the region."

Whatever the attitude of many a Buddhist, or Ladakh Buddhist Association, or Gumpa Association, towards "behind-the-scene" activity of some religious and political leaders of the Muslim community, there is no doubt that a young, modern and ambitious Buddhist girl likes partnership with an educated, fashionable and well-to-do Muslim male. For a desirous Buddhist girl a new male is emerging (in well-to-do Muslim families), a healthy husband who is finding new emotional values in marriage, new insights into his own and his wife's conduct, and new frontiers of pleasure within the home. A Muslim male is not to be doubted or blamed if he chose a smiling, willing Buddhist girl as the best solution for his recurrent urgency ; he chose a particular female because he preferred to fulfil his urgency with one whom he loved and admired and with whom he wished to establish a partnership. In this, he has also been encouraged by elders in his community. And if these eleders are motivated by a desire to see an increase in the number of members of their community, they cannot be stopped as long as they remain peaceful and knowledgeable of provisions of law in case of

grown-up boys and girls. Similarly, if elders in the Buddhist community have an unabated desire to bring about an increase in the Buddhist population, they have a crucial role to play; they have to prepare the youth, to train and educate youngsters to make them receptive to new ideas, to make their girls conscious of the values and utility of the religion they profess without dealing the subject on communal grounds, and to start a dialogue with leaders of the Muslim community on merits and demerits of the issue arising from the encouragement, overt or covert, being provided to Muslim youths in enticing Buddhist girls.

Happily for Ladakh Buddhist Association, a number of Lamas and leaders, including Kushak Bakula, Sonam Narboo, Minister for Works, and Sonam Wangyal, a former Minister of State, as well as some Buddhist cultural forums have begun opposing the system of polyandry in Ladakh. Apparent idea is to do away with the ugly system of the plurality of husbands. The system was not introduced by Buddhism, but in the course of centuries it came to be adopted as a practical measure to limit the population of the elevated desert of Ladakh. In many Ladakh villages polyandry is, except among the few rich people, quite general. The practice of polyandry originated from the smallness of the extent of land that could be tilled and general inelasticity of the country's resources. The institution is confined to the brothers in a family, the eldest marrying a wife whose other husbands are also his brothers. The usual number of such husbands is two, but three or four can also get married to the same wife. The younger brothers remain in a very subordinate position in the family, but the wife is held in common. In addition to this form of polyandry, there is freedom for the lady to choose yet another husband from a different family, a stranger.

It is true that, with the opening of the land-locked Ladakh by roads, the role of the monasteries and Lamas in social life is declining. But the relationship between the monks and the people continues to be close. Buddhist population may not create obstacles if the Lamas unite, give up lethargy and go from village to village, as advised by the Dalai Lama in August-

September 1976, to build public opinion against the practice of plurality of husbands. Medically, the system of polyandry is harmful. According to Dr. Ghulam Qadir Khan, a physician and lecturer in the Government Medical College in Srinagar, plurality of husbands can result in an increased incidence of veneral diseases such as syphilis and gonorrhoea. Dr. Khan has found that the ugly system of polyandry has caused, in many cases, urinary tract infection, particularly in the female, complicated problems on account of abortions and leucorrhoea.

At five O'clock that morning the moon was still round and full in its losing struggle against the day. Duchen, a married Buddhist lady, was declared dead after a long illness. Her only male child, 10-month old, was adopted by Fatima, a middle-aged woman of Leh in 1974, when the child was 15-month old.

As one of the oldest forms of surgery known to a Muslim is the operation of cutting away the foreskin, the fold of skin that encircles the head of the penis, Fatima and her husband arranged a feast as the circumcision ceremony, held for Duchen's son, was over. Circumcision is a requirement of two of the world's major religions, Judaism and Mohammedanism. The practice may have originated as a hygienic measure and become formalised as a religious rite. The hygienic value of circumcision has today been generally conceded, and some physicians recommend the operation as a routine measure for all male infants.

You have heard of Americans having the highest rate of divorce. Will it be a surprise to you if you are told that the Buddhist homeland has the world's lowest rate of divorce ? Ladakhi Buddhists have yet to support the technique of and circumstances for a divorce between the two partners. They feel that Buddhism has taught them "compassion, courtesy and kindness, loyalty and politeness in word".

Ladakhi Buddhists know it well that in the Muslim-majority tahsil of Kargil marital infedility is nothing new in man's history ; it has followed monogamy like a shadow. But it is far

from overwhelming a sturdy institution. Most marriages escape it entirely. Others prosper despite its occasional hauntings. When it occurs, wives sometimes find a way to make peace with it; husbands who must face it in their wives find it harder to accept. A substantial marital infedilities defy statistical measurement. Husbands, particularly, are stubbornly secretive when interviewed about their extra marital adventures.

Not more than 25 out of a total of 235 inhabited villages in the district of Ladakh are provided with different types of medical institutions. The number of family planning centres is larger (13) than the number of dispensaries (10). The number of health centres has been placed at 2. In the matter of dispensaries, Zanskar tahsil with 4.0 per cent of its villages equipped with dispensaries is seemingly ahead of other two tahsils. This has, however, a statistical value only as the number of dispensaries in this case is only one. Medical facilities in the urban part of the district are provided by two hospitals and one TB clinic. Family planning facilities, as claimed by the government, have been made available in all the three tahsils of the district. Some families in the towns of Leh and Kargil know the progress in the direction of biological contraception. Young married girls of these families know of the condom, or sheath, of douche, of foaming tablets, of creams and jellies, of diaphragm, of cervical cap and of pill.

With about 225 schools for boys and girls in the district new ideas have begun to penetrate Ladakh. Educational facilities up to primary standard have been extended to the people living even in remote areas like Zanskar and Chumathang. In order to attract more children to schools, a special scheme known as "Border Area Scholarship" was introduced in 1965-66. Under this scheme, scholarships are given to children of nomadic tribes living in the border area of Changthong. A larger portion of Buddhist population can read and write in their mother tongue—the Bhodi. But modern education is spreading in the entire region and people learn not only English, but also Hindi and Urdu. According to some Chinese scholars, the script of the Bhodi language is based on the Brahmi characters of Kashmir valley. About 1,318 years ago, a Tibetan king is stated to

have deputed one of his ministers to India to work out an alphabet for the Tibetan language. He evolved an alphabet with four vowels and thirty consonants based on the Brahmi characters of Kashmir. From Lhasa the alphabet was introduced in Ladakh.

There are no arrangements even for primary education in at least 42 of total inhabited villages in the district of Ladakh. Leh and Kargil, where 76 per cent and 73 per cent of villages are provided with primary school facilities, are much ahead of Zanskar. In a backward tahsil like Zanskar known for its poor communications, 57 per cent villages enjoy primary school facilities. It is distressing that not more than 14 per cent inhabited villages in the frontier district have middle schools. The position in respect of secondary education is no more better. Secondary education in rural Ladakh is provided by only 11 schools, which are located in as many villages.

There are four factors on whose fulfilment depends the real progress of Ladakh. These are irrigation, electrification, fuel and communications. Knowing the growing importance of irrigation for Ladakh's agricultural development, a Ladakhi, who is hardy and industrious by nature, generally does not allow even a drop of water to go waste. Land under cultivation is irrigated by means of *kuhls* taken from the snow-fed streams. The total area brought under cultivation, until the end of 1977 was put at 46,500 acres. Over 94 per cent of cultivated land of the district is irrigated. While the proportion of the irrigated land in Kargil and Zanskar tahsils is above the district average, irrigated land in Leh tahsil is lower than the district average of 94.4 per cent. The percentage of irrigated land in Zanskar tahsil is very high and works to 98.9 per cent.

Three rivers—the Indus, the Suru and the Dras—traverse Ladakh without creating the required scope for assured irrigation schemes. This is because of the fact that these rivers flow along the bottom of the sentinel—like high mountain ranges. Most of the vegetation and growth of trees like willows, poplars and apricots can be seen on and near the river banks. Thou-

sands of trees have been grown in Ladakh by progressive farmers, assisted by the State agriculture department. The Indian army planted more than 30,000 willows and poplars in the region until the end of 1977. Although the chain of high mountains prevent the entry of any water-laden cloud into Ladakh, stragglers manage to infiltrate into the region. Even then the rainfall in the area is scanty.

The question of electrification in Ladakh has been engaging a good deal of attention of the authorities. Leh and Kargil are, at present, being fed from the diesel generating sets. In 1965 the government set up an investigation division in Ladakh, where in a period of two and a half years it completed surveys of nine canals. While the Kharbhathang irrigation project, to cost Rs. 52 lakhs, will irrigate 2,000 acres of land, the Abichanmothang irrigation project involving an expenditure of Rs. 12.30 lakhs will irrigate 1,500 acres. The Stakna and the Gargarthang irrigation projects, to cost over Rs. 40 lakhs, will irrigate about 4,000 acres of land. The revestigation division had also prepared the project report of three hydro-electric projects. But only one hydro-electric scheme at Stakna in the region has been taken in hand. The project has been estimated to cost more than Rs. 12.5 crores.

Ladakh is perhaps the only district in Jammu and Kashmir where forests are non-existent. Shortage of fuel and timber in the region is therefore, understandable. Besides dried dung, the principal fuel used is a kind of bush called "burtse", the short Tibetan furze known as "dama" and the pencil-cedar. These require much labour to collect from hills and ravines. Willow and poplar trees furnish good firewood, but they are too valuable to be wasted as fuel. Kerosene is used as fuel in the towns of Leh and Kargil.

As the communications from the key to the socio-economic development of Ladakh, the authorities have been (following the bitter experience during the Chinese attack in 1962) giving a top priority to the construction of roads in the most inhospitable terrain. Partnership of the Borders Roads Organisation, which maintains the Srinagar-Leh highway, and hardy

Ladakhis has proved useful in opening a network of roads in the region. In all, 70 of the total inhabited villages of the district were provided with the communication facilities by the end of 1977. Of these, 32 villages have been connected with pucca roads and the rest with kutcha roads. This shows that majority of villages are still devoid of communication links. Ladakh has about 400 kilometres of black-topped roads, 1,270 kilometres of motorable roads and 700 minor and major bridges. With the development of the internal road system in the frontier district, there is a demand from the people for provision of road transport facilities on internal routes. Apart from what the State Regional Transport Corporation can do in this connection, an attempt is called for to encourage local cooperatives and individuals to take up the transport business on internal routes.

The basic economic unit, outside Kargil and Leh towns, is the village nestling in almost every cultivable niche in the valleys of Indus and Shayok rivers and their tributaries. A helicopter postal service was introduced in Ladakh in 1976 to cater to the needs of the population in the remote and inaccessible areas. The service which operates mainly in the Nubra valley, goes as far away as Diksit village on the border. Over 600 people inhabiting the village, who had never known the postal facilities, now receive their mail at their door-step. Some steps have been taken to connect Leh with Delhi through communication satellite. According to S.C. Kakar, General Manager, Jammu and Kashmir Telecommunication Circle, the link-up, proposed to be commissioned during 1981-82, will provide stable communication between Ladakh and the rest of India. All told there are 46 post offices in the rural sector of the district which more or less are equally shared by Kargil and Leh tahsils. While the lone telegraph office is located at Kargil, the three villages provided with telephone facilities are distributed in the ratio of 2 (Leh) and 1 (Kargil). The fact that postal services in the rural sector, covering a population of more than 97,400 persons, are catered by 46 post offices shows that there is one post office for every 2,250 persons.

About 90 per cent of the people of Ladakh live by agriculture. The principal crops grown are barley, grim and wheat.

Over 19,000 acres are under barley, grim and wheat cultivation, whereas about 9,000 acres are under pulses and millets. More than 17,000 acres of land are under non-food and fodder crops. The State agriculture department has set up seven farms which are used for conducting research on cereals, pulses, fruit, high-yielding wheat, maize and vegetables. A number of Ladakhis are today growing cabbage, brinjal, cauliflower, carrot, turnip, tomato, peas, chillies and onion. Some of these Ladakhis are studying the feasibility of setting up tubewells on their farms to get fresh water or underground shelters for raising poultry. In 1976, I found several Ladakhi peasants receptive to new ideas flowing from the Field Research Laboratory in Leh. Work done by the Field Research Laboratory (FRL), sponsored and financed by the Indian Defence Ministry, in introducing new methods of agricultural development, is striking. FRL has successfully introduced high-yielding varieties of potatoes, tomatoes, cabbage, cauliflower, turnip, raddish, knolkhol, peas, wheat and maize. FRL has already bagged several awards for its unique exhibits like cabbage weighing 20 pounds, cauliflower (14 pounds), raddish (20 pounds), turnip (13 pounds) and knol-khol (9 pounds). FRL has also made much progress in developing poultry and cross-breed cows yielding more milk than local cows in the district of Ladakh.

In view of the high altitude, extreme cold, lack of oxygen and humidity, the agricultural season in Ladakh is limited to the May-October period. The Field Research Laboratory has achieved a breakthrough in raising maize and wheat crops even under the harsh conditions. Experiments on trenches, boxes and glass houses at high altitudes are being conducted for stretching the agricultural season. The army scientists not only conduct research and supply the seedlings but also visit private farms, invite peasants to the laboratory and hold discussions with them. The scientists have succeeded in keeping poultry birds in underground houses, kept warm during the freezing surface temperature. Since 1970 the underground houses have been supplying 6,000 to 8,000 table birds annually. A concrete underground building has been built at the laboratory's farm to increase poultry production.

In 1975, a 7-member delegation of the Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR), led by its Deputy Director-General, D. R. Bhumba, conducted a study of the nature of research and development effort required for the development of agriculture and allied fields in Ladakh. The delegation was sponsored by the Government of India for studying the possibilities of the region's accelerated development in agriculture and allied fields. The ICAR has provided 50 ewes and 10 rams to the Kashmir Government as part of its programme to help increase production of soft wool in the State. The ewes and rams, imported from the USSR, have been housed at the Khumbhathang farm in the Kargil sector of Ladakh. Of a total of 91,000 goats in the district of Ladakh, about 70,000 are pashmina-bearing. The maximum yield of wool recorded by the end of 1976 was 700 grams and the minimum 200 grams. Production of pasham wool, the basic ingredient for Kashmir's shawl industry, is expected to increase from 28,000 kilograms at present to 75,000 kilograms by the end of 1979. A scheme has been launched by the authorities in Ladakh to outcross the local breed with the Goran Alataskyia breed so as to increase the size and production of pashmina wool. Angora bucks from Turkey are also being used for outcrossing both pashmina and non-pashmina goats.

As part of the plans to develop India's frontier areas as quickly as possible, some steps have been taken to conduct a detailed mineral survey in Ladakh and make sure whether any industry can be set up in the region on the basis of its mineral resources. First investigation of borax deposits in Ladakh was made by the Indian Bureau of Mines in 1951. According to the subsequent surveys made by geologists, Ladakh was found to be rich in minerals. Borax to the tune of about 6,000 tonnes was found in Pugga and Nubra valleys. Besides occurrence of sulphur in Pugga valley, there is an encrustment of sodium carbonate on top of borax deposits. Although the large number of known occurrences of non-metallic ores in the region are to be investigated in detail, some reserves of limestone suitable for cement came to light some time back. Sulphur-bearing gypsum deposits and mica occur in the area. Presence of coal deposits at some places in the district was known since long. In 1925,

existence of coal was reported by Middlemiss of the Geological Survey of India. But his report did not give figures about the reserves or quality. Oxides of copper ore have been located in the Leh area and Shera. Nuggets of copper have already been collected from the bed of the Zanskar river.

Alluvial gold has been found at about half a dozen places along the terraces of the three rivers—the Indus, the Dras and the Suru. Occurrence of lode gold and sulphide ores have also been located at three places in the region by a group of geologists. As alluvial gold is said to be available along the terraces of the three rivers, a plan was formulated in 1976 to undertake a detailed investigation to assess the deposits of alluvial gold and lode gold. Indian Deputy Minister for Steel and Mines, Sukhdev Prasad, told newsmen in Srinagar on 6 September 1976 that utilisation of sulphur and borax extracted from Pugga valley had yielded encouraging results to the Regional Research Laboratory (RRL) at Jammu where some pilot plants had been set up for the purpose. Geological Survey of India, he said, had established existence of over 2.10 lakh tonnes of sulphur in Pugga valley. With the increase in tempo of geothermal investigation and use of drilling machine for assessing hot fluids' reservoir, drilling to a depth of 1,250 metres was completed during 1975-76 in Pugga valley.

Among the fruits grown in Ladakh, apricots occupy a significant place and play an important role in the socio-economic life of the population. Apricots are grown in abundance, and some of the varieties are of a high quality. Moorcroft and Trebeck, who toured the region during 1819-1825, were so much impressed by the superb quality of the fruits that they recommended the introduction of some of these strains into Europe. In view of the importance of apricots in the economy of Ladakh and their demand within India, the Regional Research Laboratory (RRL) carried out systematic studies on various aspects of the utilisation of this fruit. The RRL has designed and fabricated a solar drier reduces for speedy and hygienic drying of the fruit. According to Dr. C. K. Atal, Director of the RRL, the device reduces the time in drying and gives a cleaner product with longer stor-

age life, better flavour and more attractive appearance in comparison to the product traditionally obtained by drying under the sun. Dr. Atal said in October 1977 that scientists of the RRL tried the solar drier for three seasons between 1975 and 1977 and its efficiency under field conditions was ascertained, stabilised and demonstrated. More than 20 such sets were fabricated in the laboratory and loaned to the fruit-growers in ten villages of Ladakh.

Chapter 3

Ladakh, an area of some 46,000 square miles, is gradually changing. The change is noticeable in the Ladakhi countenances and in the altered or altering landscape. The only thing that does not seem to have changed is interdependence of life and talk.

A visit to some sparsely-populated villages, or to some houses in Leh and its suburbs, can provide a glimpse of how the old talk of the exciting days of caravans across mountain passes to Sinkiang. To them life without talk in the inert surroundings would be unbearable. And although the younger set would try for a seat in the cinema at Leh or spend an hour or so in a restaurant or simply show off a new shirt or new-fangled gadgets or a new brand of cigarette, fact remains that they also evince an element of interest in the events of the past and of the changes that have taken place across the border in Central Asia.

At least 350 Ladakhis—monks, students and traders—are held up in Tibet. Their whereabouts are not fully known. Naturally their kith and kin in Ladakh have every reason to be anxious. Prominent among the persons, held in Tibet, is Stan Tsang

Raspa. The 1959 revolt in Tibet pulled down the shutters; Stan Tsang Raspa, Kushak of Ladakh's biggest and famous Hemis monastery, was not permitted by the Chinese to return to Ladakh. Raspa is married to a Tibetan girl ; he was forced by the Chinese to marry the girl somewhere in central Tibet. Raspa had gone to Lhasa in 1955 for studying Buddhism. He was installed Kushak of the Hemis monastery at the age of six. He has been considered by the red sect Lamas as an incarnation of a great Tibetan Lama, Stan-Tsang-ras-chen, who, according to one historical account, built the Hemis monastery, 50 kilometres from Leh.

A group of Lamas had threatened (in 1973) to start a war if any individual or organisation forced them to have a new Kushak for the Hemis monastery. With the passage of time, however, these and other Lamas changed their srance. In 1975, they favoured installation of Dugchan Rinpoche as the new Kushak for the monastery. The monastery is stated to have been built 358 years ago. It is a large mass of buildings placed just beneath a cliff at a bend of the narrow ravine. The Lamas, living in the Hemis monastery, generally express displeasure and inability, too, when asked to part with a portion of the ancient literature and books of the monastery. Although some Lamas were told that the large collection of books which, if edited and annotated, could throw sufficient light on the ancient culture and history of the region, they refused to part with the "treasure" in absence of an assurance by a responsible organisation that the monastery's books and manuscripts would not be permitted to disappear.

The district of Ladakh was formerly a part of Chinese Tibet under a governor called Gyapu. The region was attacked in 1538 A.D. by Sultan Sayed of Yarkand. In 1685 A.D. the territory was attacked by Kalmakun. The region came under Skardu first in 1620 A.D. and later during 1720—50 A.D. About 1687 it came under the nominal sway of the Mughal Emperor. Rudok, Porang, Guge and Lowo districts of western Tibet formed part of Ladakh in the 17th century when it was an independent kingdom. But these districts were lost in the

Mongol war of 1682-83 when only Menser village (in Guge district) was allowed to remain with Leh. The enclave continued to pay land revenue to Ladakh kings till 1840 when the area was conquered by the Dogras of Jammu. At one time Lahul and Spiti were also included in Ladakh.

Ladakh lost its independence for the first time in 1834 A.D. when Maharaja Gulab Singh despatched Zorawar Singh with a well-organised and well-equipped force of about 5,000 to conquest Ladakh. The force crossed into the mountain-locked region from Kishtwar. There was no opposition at first. But on the 16th of August, a force of about 5,000 men made an unsuccessful attempt to stop the Dogra advance at Sankho. Zorawar Singh's men marched on until the commencement of winter season when the Dogra General wanted to go back. He, therefore, wanted negotiations which the Ladakhis refused. The Ladakhi ruler, Tsepal Namgyal, made peace with Zorawar only after the Dogras mounted a fresh attack in the spring of 1835. In order to keep the Ladakhis in good humour Zorawar Singh formulated a new strategy. He began to enlist their support to subjugate their neighbours, the Baltis. The Dogra General set about the invasion of Baltistan in early 1840.

Following his triumph over Baltistan and the neighbouring territories, Zorawar Singh thought of conquering Tibet. So early in 1841 he issued an ultimatum to the Tibetan governor at Gartok to surrender. The ultimatum followed the formation of a force of nearly 6,000 men, most of them Ladakhis and Baltis. The two armies crossed swords on 10 December at Toyo and the fighting continued till 12 December. Zorawar's soldiers, as Alexander Cunningham pointed out, fought under very great disadvantages. "The battle-field was upwards of 15,000 feet above the sea and the time mid-winter, when even during the day the temperature never rises above the freezing point...... For several nights the Indian troops had been exposed to all the bitterness of the climate. Many had lost the use of their fingers and toes...... On the last fatal day not one half of the men could handle arms." A peace treaty was signed between the Lhasa government and Gulab Singh in 1842. Ladakh

came under Jammu under the treaty. Before his death in 1857, Gulab Singh had made himself the ruler of Bhaderwah and Kishtwar in Jammu region and Ladakh and Baltistan in about two decades. Later, during the reign of Maharaja Ranbir Singh, suitable steps were taken to maintain hold of the Dogra in Ladakh. Following the death of Ranbir Singh in 1885, Maharaja Pratap Singh had somewhat anxious time as a shift in the British policy on the Indian frontiers had resulted in the installation of a Resident to control the State. Pratap Singh's brother, Raja Amar Singh, played an important part in Kashmir affairs. From 1887 to 1905 the administration was run by a small council of which the Maharaja was President and Amar Singh Vice-President after 1891. The council was abolished in 1905. Maharaja Hari Singh, who ascended the *Gadi* in September 1925 after the death of Pratap Singh, could not devote sufficient attention to the question of bringing about social and economic changes in Ladakh inasmuch as he was kept engaged by the British in the raging struggle for ascendency in Gilgit.

Complete withdrawal of the British from all over the Indian subcontinent in 1947 also compelled them to cry a halt to their involvement and activity in Ladakh. The Instrument of Accession, signed by Maharaja Hari Singh on 26 October, led the Governor-General of India to announce on 27 October that his Government had decided to "accept the accession of Kashmir State to the Dominion of India". Ladakh also acceded to India, and accordingly the region became a part of the Indian Union. Motivated by the desire to occupy a sizable chunk of the Kashmir territory, Pakistani raiders sought new adventures in the remote districts of Baltistan and Ladakh following their failure to pierce the Indian troops' steel ring in the west of Uri in Kashmir and in the south-west of Jammu. In 1948, Indian troops under the command of General Thimayya entered Ladakh via the Zojila pass, beyond Sonamarg in Kashmir, to expel Pakistani raiders from the region. It was for the first time that light tanks were also taken across the Zojila in November that year. About 35 villages of the Kargil sub-division fell under Pakistan's occupation by the time the cease-fire came into force a minute before midnight on the first day of the year 1949. These villages formed part of the territory of Baltistan.

Kushak Bakula, head priest of Spituk monastery, who approved the arrangement of Ladakh's relationship with the Indian Union following the signing of the Instrument of Accession, said in 1950 : "For good or for bad, we have finally cast our lot with India." The Kushak, however, made it clear that if at any stage the State might express a desire to become part of Pakistan, Ladakh would press for the region being directly integrated with India. Such was the feeling of the Ladakh leader against Pakistan that he warned that if under such circumstances India refused to accept his homeland within her fold, his people would have no other choice except to knock at the door of Tibet. Following the Communist coup in Sinkiang in September 1949, China issued maps to show Ladakh as a part of China or Tibet. To the Indian leaders, including Prime Minister Nehru, the Chinese cartographers had not presented the facts of geography, history, politics and international conventions. Kushak Bakula lost no time in pointing out in 1950 that the cartographers' flights of imagination served as a warning to those who lived on this side of the Karakoram mountains.

When the Chinese Communists ploughed into Sinkiang, about 500 Turk Muslim refugees from Sinkiang crossed into Ladakh by October 1949. Isa Yusul Alptekin, a former Secretary-General of the Sinkiang Government, and Mohammed Amin Bogra, a former Deputy Governor of Sinkiang, had also fled their homeland and crossed into Ladakh. Alptekin and Bogra had an opportunity to meet Kushak Bakula, who was informed by them that China's next plan was to push her men into Tibet. The Kushak who respected Indian Premier, Jawaharlal Nehru, despatched a message to him about Peking's future line of action. Nehru and his government could do nothing until the Chinese invaded Tibet in 1950. Earlier, in 1948, small groups of Chinese spies entered Tibet to find out, among other things, the strenghth of the Tibetan army. This development was followed by the massing of Chinese troops along the border in eastern Tibet. As the Tibetan army and the government were not well-equipped to meet the threat, an appeal was sent to Britain, the USA, India and Nepal for help. While America and Britain expressed their inability to render assistance to the Tibetans,

India and Nepal did not involve themselves in the fear of being misunderstood or troubled by China.

The Dalai Lama was only sixteen when the Chinese troops caused havoc and terror in eastern Tibet. No sooner did the Chinese occupy this part of Tibet than the Dalai Lama's elder brother was sent to Lhasa as their emissary to persuade the former and his government to accept Chinese domination. The Dalai Lama started negotiations with the Chinese on the question of their withdrawal from eastern Tibet and bringing about normalisation of relations between the two sides. The Chinese refused to accept his plea ; the result was that Chinese troops marched ahead and created agonizing moments of despair for the Tibetans and their spiritual leader. The Chinese increased their strength to repress their opponents in Tibet ; the Dalai Lama was forced to have direct negotiations with the Chinese leaders in Peking. In response to the invitation by the Chinese Government to visit China, the Dalai Lama left Lhasa in 1954 much against the wishes of his people. That was the time when the Chinese had begun work on building strategic roads from the east and north-east. In the midst of courtesy and warmth shown to him by the members of the Chinese Government on his arrival in Peking, the Dalai Lama was told by the Chinese officials and Mao Tse-tung that the Government of China would do its best to help the Tibetans. In one of his meetings with him, Chairman Mao told the Dalai Lama that while China had sent two Generals, Chang Chin-wu and Fan Ming to Lhasa to help the people of Tibet on the one hand, Peking intended, on the other, to set up a committee of political and military members to assist the local government in Tibet. The Dalai Lama got highly impressed by the calibre and personality of Chairman Mao in the initial stage. And as the Chinese adopted the "policy of persecution" in Tibet, the Dalai Lama got disillusioned. Chou En-lai, too, held the stick from a different end after the Dalai Lama concluded his visit to China. Chou was accused of having approved the "policy of presecution" in Tibet. Apart from pushing a large number of Tibetan boys into the School of Nationalities in Peking for being educated on the importance of new ideas of dictatorship, Chinese opened a number of such centres in Tibet by 1956 when the Chinese military camp out-

side the Norbulingka palace of the Dalai Lama in Lhasa began to hum with activity.

In 1956, fighting broke out in Litang between Tibetan guerillas and Chinese troops. Chinese began to concentrate in central Tibet during the second half of 1956. A number of military posts were set up by the Chinese in central Tibet after they had struck terror among the Tibetans and made use of bullets and bombs to introduce reforms in the eastern provinces. Chinese army deeply entrenched itself in Lhasa and its suburbs between 1957 and 1959. In March 1959, Chinese military commanders, including General Tan Kuan-san, issued an ultimatum by shouting at some Tibetan Ministers and officials in the Chinese camp in Lhasa on 10 March that "we shall act now to destroy reactionaries in Tibet". Chinese Communists had been convinced that warlike armed Khampas and Amdos, who had adopted anti-Chinese posture, had been instigated and encouraged by the Dalai Lama's government. The situation in Lhasa changed altogether between 13 March and 16 March when the Chinese army personnel made their presence felt by moving in machine-guns and positioning a couple of military vehicles near the northern gate of the Norbulingka palace.

The day that was. Late night on 17 March, the Dalai Lama put on a soldier's uniform and slung a rifle on his shoulder some minutes before he fled his palace. Less than two days after his departure from the palace, Chinese began shelling Lhasa and Norbulingka, too. Several houses and monasteries and Norbulingka palace got damaged; some thousands of Tibetans were killed between 18 March and 20 March in the adjoining parts of the two palaces—Norbulingka and Potala. The Dalai Lama and a party of his companions, eventually, entered Tezpur from where a special train, arranged by the Indian Government, took them to Mussoorie in the foothills of the Himalayas north of Delhi.

The tragedy had overtaken Tibet by the time the Dalai Lama and other Tibetan refugees entered the Indian territory. Disturbances in Tibet created a good deal of concern among

Buddhist followers of the Dalai Lama in Ladakh particularly about the future of Menser, an Indian enclave in western Tibet which acknowledged sovereignty of Ladakh for over 300 years. Over 6 million Chinese had been settled in Tibet by 1961 when the number of the Tibetans in the country was placed at less than 7 million by the Dalai Lama. A new chapter was added to history in 1962 when Chinese regime resorted to arms to enforce its territorial claims, culminating in a massive attack on India on 20 October that year. The Chinese attacked simultaneously in two places—NEFA and Ladakh. In Ladakh, the Chinese attacked Indian posts in the Damchok area on 27 October. Indian troops withdrew from Daulat Beg Oldi area on 5 November. The Chinese shelled the Chushul area on 17 November, and two Indian posts fell on 18 November. China occupied a further area of 2,500 square miles in Ladakh, in addition to the 12,000 square miles occupied earlier through aggressive intrusions.

In April 1962, Kushak Bakula had sent a communication to Jawaharlal Nehru informing him about Chinese "massive" military build-up in western Tibet with the main purpose of creating "trouble" in Ladakh. The communication, as pointed out by the Kushak, was based on the material doled out to the Buddhist leader by some Tibetan refugees after their entry into Ladakh. That was the time when the Dalai Lama had also detailed two messengers to Delhi to inform Nehru about "hectic military activity being manipulated by the Chinese troops close to the border in Ladakh". Nehru was reported anxious over certain developments across the Indo-Pakistan border. These also included Pakistan's plan to purchase Italian jet fighters for raising an effective wing of the air force in "Azad Kashmir". V. K. Krishna Menon, Indian Defence Minister, who flew into Srinagar in May 1962, held talks with army commanders and met officers and men of the Indian air force. Menon also met Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed and his Cabinet colleagues and discussed with them various questions relating to Jammu and Kashmir against the background of the debate on Kashmir in the Security Council and Pakistan's threat to the northern bastion of India. As the situation on borders in Ladakh was not discussed in a serious

manner, the question of formulating a specific strategy to deal with the Chinese menace did not arise.

Nehru, Menon and other Indian leaders felt the need for holding the region of Ladakh for obvious strategic purposes only after China rattled New Delhi and the Indian troops, too, during her simultaneous attack in NEFA and Ladakh. Nehru also felt the need for encouraging Kushak Bakula on the political scene much against the wishes of some Kashmiri leaders, including Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, G.M. Sadiq, D.P. Dhar and Mir Qasim. Nehru visited Kashmir in June 1963. During his meetings with the ruling local politicians, especially Bakshi, Sadiq and Dhar, the Indian Premier discussed various political administrative and defence matters. One of the matters touched upon by Nehru related to Kushak Bakula's grievance against the local government's none-too-encouraging role in developing the frontier district of Ladakh. And as Nehru referred to the importance of the Kushak as an acknowledged leader of the Ladakhis, Bakshi and his colleagues avoided to be fast and furious in their views on the Kushak. After Nehru's departure for Delhi Bakshi tried to cultivate a Pandit journalist of Srinagar for persuading Kushak Bakula to avoid to refer "every issue, small or big," to Nehru. "I am surprised over all that has happened so far. I and my colleagues have no ill will against Kushak Bakula. We know he is an important leader in his region. I want you to make the Kushak understand that while his role has acquired significance after the Chinese invasion, he should not think that I have scant regard for him", Bakshi told the journalist. And what followed showed that both the Kushak and his trusted Pandit journalist favoured a direct link with New Delhi without routing any information (in which the Kushak was interested) through the proper channel—Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed. Nehru, too wanted the Kushak to be in touch with him "whenever there is any problem which needs our immediate attention". This became clear from a letter sent by Nehru to Bakula in the beginning of July 1963.

Earlier, like any other part of India, the State's three units—Ladakh, Kashmir and Jammu—woke up to the threat posed by

the Chinese. To many people, especially Ladakhis, the Chinese commando tactics and operations revealed a more perilous pattern than that set in the State in 1947-48 by the Pakistani marauders. Many steps to strengthen defence effort and mobilise public opinion were taken by the Bakshi Government. Arrangments were also made to give military training to students, increase the strength of the ACC and NCC Rifles. The fighting capacities of the Ladakhis which were brought to light as a result of the Chinese attack, could well be counted among the unexpected harvests of external aggression. The courage and determination shown by the Ladakhi scouts in their fight against the well-trained and vastly better-equipped Chinese troops proved beyond doubt the fighting potential of the frontier region. Offers of blood and cash donations from Ladakhis were quite encouraging. During and after the Chinese invasion Buddhist monasteries of Ladakh hummed with religious ceremonies as part of the monks' desire to seek Buddha's mercy. Lamas were summoned every morning and in evenings, too, to prayers by the beat of drums. Style and system of offering prayers were the same as one finds them today. As a Lama enters the Gumpa, he raises his joined hands above his head, then oppened, and again closed them before his breast. Next he places them on the ground, so as to rest upon them while touching the floor with his forehead, in prostration before the images of Buddha and other deities. Inside the Gumpa, Lamas sit down in rows. Prayers are offered after which a performance of instrumental music begins.

A controversy was sparked off between New Delhi and Peking on the question of defining, properly and objectively, the "line of actual control" in Ladakh following the cessation of hostilities between Chinese and Indian troops on the Ladakh border in 1962. The Chinese generally claimed that the line coincided "in the main" with what they called "traditional and customary line". For New Delhi the Chinese "line of actual control" was no line at all ; it consisted merely of a few isolated Chinese posts on Indian territory—posts which China had progressively established since 1957 by forcibly and unilaterally altering the traditional status quo of the boundary. In his letter to the Chinese Premier on December 1, 1962, Nehru rejected

the Chinese interpretation of the "line of actual control" and brought to the fore New Delhi's standpoint against the distortion of facts of history and of geography. Government of India's anger and protestation against all that China had committed on the Ladakh borders did not upset the Communist leaders in Peking ; China began to strengthen her hold on the regions close to the borders in Ladakh in spite of her assurance to New Delhi that she had no territorial claim against India.

Chapter 4

The decade that was 1950 to 1960. The first half of the period was, following the fall of Sinkiang in 1949, frittered away, and the result was that an element of frustration among the people of Ladakh came into being. While trade with Sinkiang came to an end with the march of Chinese troops in Eastern Turkistan by the end of September 1949, trade between Ladakh and Tibet began to decline during the 1950-60 decade until it completely stopped in the wake of Chinese aggression on Ladakh in 1962.

As the Chinese Communists sealed Sinkiang's borders with Ladakh, the Central Asian trade via Leh and Kargil became a thing of the past. The trade which was valued at Rs. 93 Lakhs in 1920, fell to a little over Rs. 78,000 in 1939-40. The trade, until the Chinese stormed in, dwindled further on account of internal trouble and hostile attitude to the trade in some areas in Central Asia. Ladakh's trade with Tibet also declined from 1957 when China began to establish small military posts in some parts of western Tibet, close to Ladakh. Formerly, cereals used to be exchanged with pashmina wool and salt from western Tibet. At one time, out of the sizable quantities of pashmina wool imported from western Tibet by Ladakhi traders

in exchange for their goods, more than 2,700 quintals used to be sold to the Kashmiris for making of shawls. Sinkiang fell. And Tibet, too, fell. Economic conditions in Ladakh were adversely affected ; steps taken to help the Ladakhis were neither effective nor systematic.

Ladakh assumed real importance, for the first time after India's Independence, soon after the Chinese attack in October 1962. The arrival of Indian army in the wake of Chinese aggression focussed attention on Ladakh's problems. While development in the region received fresh impetus, the presence of troops started a social revolution. The jingle of money became audible and an average Ladakhi family began to earn at least Rs. 9 a day by helping build or repair roads. In spite of the Chinese military activities along the border in July 1963, India's defence organisation looked smooth and Indian soldiers bristled with energy and enthusiasm. Whether or not Indian army and air force were strong enough to hold back the Chinese forces was difficult to say but it was a fact that the situation had improved radically during the eight months after the Chinese attack. Some of the major defects in India's defence structure which had led to humiliation in 1962, had been removed by July-August 1963. Until the 1962 conflict with China, India had in the forward areas "penny posts" entrusted not with the task of defending Indian soil but with that of waving the country's flag as a physical demonstration of India's jurisdiction over the region. And since the purpose of their establishment was political, they were often ill-equipped, situated at points which were militarily indefensible and lacked a supported line of defence.

The situation now is what it was not then. With Chinese troops only 200 kilometres away from Leh, something new has entered the lives of the people living in the border area. There is among the hardy Ladakhis an urge to learn and to work and willingness to cooperate with the authorities in every possible way. Leh is today one of the important bases in the country charged with the responsibility of checking further westward advance by the Chinese forces. The construction of the Kargil-Leh road, which at places lies over mountains 13,000 to

14,000 feet high, has solved the logistic problem to a large extent. The Beacons, who came to Ladakh in 1960, have done much to rid the road of its natural hazards. But there are factors over which they have little control. The 120-kilometre stretch between Gund and Kargil, for example, needs about two and half months before all the snow on it is cleared and the road made serviceable. Nevertheless, the road the Beacons have designed is meant for three-tonners. Until the completion of the Kargil-Leh road, all military and road building equipment had to be airlifted. It is said that about three tonnes of material had to be airlifted to maintain one soldier in the frontier area for one year.

The trans-Himalayan region is not without problems for men and officers of the Indian army. For example, in the much publicised areas of Leh and Kargil one mountain ridge after another and tall cliffs loom over the bunkers the soldiers live in. The inhospitable terrain and wilderness of the region can break the bravest of spirits. At Kargil, situated at a height of over 9,000 feet, position of the Indian troops and that of Pakistani forces is somewhat peculiar. A hill feature, at an altitude of about 13,000 feet, overlooking a portion of the Kargil town, is in the occupation of Pakistani troops. This hill feature, criss-crossed with concrete bunkers, was captured by the Indian army twice. But it was given back to Pakistani forces, first under the Rann of Kutch agreement and, later, under the Tashkent declaration. The strategic hill feature is within 3-inch mortar range from the Kargil town, or one can say that the town of Kargil is within 3-inch mortar range from the hill feature. Two more hill features, situated at a height of over 13,000 feet, overlooking the Kargil town, are in the occupation of Pakistanis. On the other hand, the Indian troops occupy three elevated pickets, one of them 14,200 feet high, from where they are able to see through a pair of binoculars some activities of the Pak troops and civilians in two or three sparsely-populated villages.

Used to the worst possible winters, especially in Dras, second coldest place in the world after Siberia, and Tangtse valley, the people of Ladakh have been astonished by the

Indian army's arrangements for providing hot foot to the troops stationed at higher reaches in Ladakh. Huge, heavy army vehicles driven by young drivers on the Srinagar-Leh road have to cross several dangerous points near and across the Zojila. Driving the vehicles on the road for 150 days in a year is breath-taking and full of risks. Coiling road from Sonamarg to Zojila is so treacherous that both driver and passengers are made to puff and blow. In order to mobilise the army vehicular traffic on the road and maintain the morale of the drivers, the Army Service Corps (ASC) has nicely developed itself into an indispensable and integral part of the armed forces. The ASC started as the administrative component of the armies of the East India Company in 1760. It was in the recognition of its excellent performance that the Corps was named as the Indian Army Service Corps in 1923.

Following India's freedom, the ASC got involved here and there in India, especially in the snowbound tracts of Ladakh and the Himalayas, in the deserts of Rajasthan, in and around the jungles of NEFA and Nagaland and in the plains of Punjab. The ASC raises sufficient stocks of foodgrains and other necessaries of life in Ladakh before the Zojila pass comes under heavy snow for about six months in a year. The ASC provides animal transport arrangements in those areas of Ladakh where mechanical transport cannot reach. The army vehicles generally cover 440 kilometres from Srinagar to Leh in three stages ; first night halt is at Dras, 147 kilometres from Srinagar, second halt for one night is at Bodh Kharbu, 126 kilometres from Dras, and on third day they reach Leh via the Fortula pass which is 13,432 feet high.

Difficult indeed, is the journey from Leh to Darbug via the Changla pass and India gate. Darbug is in the Tangtse valley, situated at a height of 13,400 feet. The Changla pass (17,300 feet) is the second highest permanent route in the world. A small temple dedicated to god Shiva has been set up just near this mountain pass, where all drivers and pedestrians stop for a while to pray for their safety. A traveller from the plains can get astonished to find thick walls of snow, besides hanging icicles, on a few points, on the Leh-Darbug road even in July.

Lungs puff and blow, intestines twist and turn, heart beats loud and fast when a sight-seer seated in a vehicle is taken from Leh to Darbug. Equally difficult are journeys from Leh to other forward areas in the region. And those who inhabit these areas or are stationed there do not hesitate to admit the utter hopelessness of things during the long winter months. Loneliness becomes unbearable between October and April when there is nothing to do.

Problems of high altitude are being solved, though gradually, by the Indian army. Since 1963 research teams have tackled a number of projects, each connected with aspects of the soldier's life at high-altitude. Prime among them is hypoxia, which is responsible for acute mountain sickness, pulmonary oedema and a diminution of the capacity for physical work. Then come problems of cold, frostbite, effects of loneliness and long separations. Tests have been carried out to determine the effects of high altitude on physical efficiency. It has been noticed that deterioration in physical efficiency can be checked by increasing the intake of certain vitamins.

In the beginning of August 1963, a research team of Indian army went to a border area in south of Leh for tackling a project connected with the effect, if any, of altitude on physiological response to cold stress. As the study on the project was going on, a supersonic jet aircraft of Chinese air force was seen flying high in the Indian territory. The plane flew back within a few seconds after it had violated the Indian air space in Ladakh. The matter was brought to the notice of New Delhi for "necessary action". True, New Delhi was unhappy over this development as well as over the situation which arose from the massing of Chinese troops in Tibet. But the Government of India, headed by Nehru, did not try to sensationalise the issue as they smarted under the impression that by going so morale of Indians could have been affected to some extent. That was the time when, following the establishment of total control of Chinese forces in Tibet and the rupture of relations between Peking and New Delhi, China had placed increasing emphasis upon modernization of the army, the weapons development and military investment.

Anti-India sentiment found a forceful expression in different parts of China soon after Nehru went to Mussoorie for a long meeting with the Dalai Lama. The Dalai Lama stayed in Mussoorie for a year before he shifted to a bungalow in Dharamsala. Chinese leaders did not like the encouragement and support given to the Dalai Lama and Tibetan refugees in India. Peking deemed it necessary to consolidate Chinese in Tibet following the Dalai Lama's anger and statements against China's "sheer brutality to subdue Tibet". As the Tibetan refugees began to scatter and settle in different parts of India, Bhutan, Sikkim and Nepal, relief organisations were set up to raise money, food, clothes and medicines for them. The Governments of Britain, the USA, Australia, New Zealand and South Vietnam also sent gifts to help the Tibetan refugees. China was not ignorant of all that was being done to help the Tibetans. But her anger against New Delhi acquired somewhat serious proportions when the Government of India formulated schemes for finding work for most of the able-bodied Tibetans. Peking had accused Nehru and his colleagues of having misled and instigated the Dalai Lama as he approached the United Nations on the question of future of Tibet. Contents of the cable sent by the Dalai Lama to the Secretary General, United Nations, from New Delhi on 9 September 1959 were :

Your Excellency,

Kindly refer to the proceedings of the General Committee of the United Nations General Assembly on Friday the 24th November, 1950 at which it was resolved that the consideration of El Salvador's complaint against 'invasion of Tibet by foreign forces' should be adjourned in order to give the parties the opportunity to arrive at a peaceful settlement. It is with deepest regret that I am informing you that the Act of aggression has been substantially extended with the result that practically the whole of Tibet is under the occupation of the Chinese forces. I and my Government have made several appeals for the peaceful and friendly settlement, but so far these appeals have been completely ignored. In these circumstances and in view of the inhuman treatment and crimes against humanity and religion to which the people of

Tibet are being subjected, I solicit immediate intervention of the United Nations and consideration by the General Committee on its own initiative of the Tibetan issue which has been adjourned. In this connection I and my Government wish to emphasize that Tibet was a sovereign state at the time when her territorial integrity was violated by the Chinese armies in 1950. In support of this contention the Government of Tibet urge the following :

First, no power of authority was exercised by the Government of China in or over Tibet since the Declaration of Independence by the Dalai Lama in 1912.

Second, the sovereign status of Tibet during this period finds conclusive evidence in the fact that the Government of Tibet concluded as many as five international agreements immediately before and during these years.

Third, the Government of Tibet take their stand on the Anglo-Tibet Convention of 1914 which recognised the sovereign status of Tibet and accorded the same position to the Tibetan plenipotentiary as was given to the representatives of Great Britain and China. It is true that this Convention imposed certain restrictions on the external sovereignty of Tibet, but these did not deprive her of her internal position. Moreover, these restrictions ceased to have any effect on the transfer of power in India.

Fourth, there is no valid and subsisting international agreement under which Tibet or any other power recognised Chinese suzerainty.

Fifth, the sovereign status of Tibet is equally evident from the fact that during the Second World War Tibet insisted on maintaining her neutrality and only allowed the transport and non-military goods from India to China through Tibet. This position was accepted by the Governments of Great Britain and China.

Sixth, the sovereign status has also been recognised by other powers. In 1948 when the trade delegation from the

Government of Tibet visited India, France, Italy, the United Kingdom and the United States of America, the passport issued by the Tibetan Government was accepted by the Governments of these countries. Your Excellency, I and my Government also solicit immediate intervention of the United Nations on humantarian grounds. Since their violation of the territorial integrity of Tibet the Chinese forces have committed the following offences against the universally accepted laws of conduct :

First, they have dispossessed thousands of Tibetans of their properties and deprived them of every source of livelihood and thus driven them to death and desperation.

Second, men, women and children have been pressed into labour gangs and made to work on military constructions without payment or on nominal payment.

Third, they have adopted cruel and inhuman measures for the purpose of sterilizing men and women with view to the total extermination of the Tibetan race.

Fourth thousands of innocent people of Tibet have been brutally massacred.

Fifth, there have been many cases of murder of leading citizens of Tibet without any cause or justification.

Sixth, every attempt has been made to destroy our religion and culture. Thousands of monasteries have been razed to the ground and sacred images and articles of religion completely destroyed. Life and property are no longer safe and Lhasa, the capital of the State, is now a dead city. The sufferings which my people are undergoing are beyond description and it is imperatively necessary that this wanton and ruthless murder of my people should be immediately brought to an end. It is in these circumstances that I appeal

to you and the United Nations in the confident hope that our appeal will receive the consideration it deserves.

Signed
The Dalai Lama.

Another communication was sent by the Dalai Lama from Dharamsala to Dag Hammarskjold, Secretary General of the United Nations. Contents of the communication (sent on 2 September 1960) were :

His Excellency,
Dag Hammarskjold,
Secretary General of the United Nations,
New York.

Your Excellency,

Last year when I formally appealed to Your Excellency for the intervention of the United Nations on behalf of the Tibet, Your Excellency was kind enough to help my representatives with your inestimable advice and valuable support. I have, therefore, ventured to approach you once again in the name of the people of Tibet who are today groaning under an intolerable burden of terror and tyranny.

As Your Excellency is no doubt aware, the situation in Tibet has now become a grim tragedy. Hundreds of Tibetans have been arriving in India and Nepal to escape from merciless persecution and inhuman treatment. But there are thousands of others who find it impossible to seek asylum in the neighbouring countries and are, therefore, threatened with immediate death and destruction. I feel most strongly that something must be done immediately to save the lives of these innocent men, women and children, and have accordingly sought the assistance and support of the Governments of many member States of the United Nations. His Excellency, the Prime Minister of the Federation of Malaya and the Government of Thailand have

generously responded to my appeal and have declared their intention to raise the Tibetan question at the next session of the General Assembly of the United Nations. It is in this connection that I have ventured to approach Your Excellency once again. As on the last occasion, I trust, Your Excellency will find it possible to use your good offices and influence in devising a practical solution of the tragic problem of Tibet. Your Excellency, I hope, will permit me to express my own feelings in the matter. I firmly believe that the only effective and speedy way in which the United Nations can help the unfortunate people of Tibet is by way of mediation either through an ad hoc body appointed for the purpose by the General Assembly or through Your Excellency's good offices. This is what I feel, and I have also expressed this view to His Excellency Tunku Abdul Rehman and His Excellency Marshal Sarit Thanarat. This, however, is only a suggestion I am making for Your Excellency's consideration, and I would be most grateful if Your Excellency could see your way to favour me with your personal advice.

With assurances of my highest esteem and consideration,

I remain,

The Dalai Lama.

A long, detailed communication was sent by the Dalai Lama to Dag Hammarskjold on 29 September 1960. The 32-paragraph communication was despatched from Dharamsala. Some portions of the communication are given below:

I am happy to learn that the question of Tibet has been inscribed on the agenda of the UN Assembly for this year at the instance of Malaya and Thailand to whom I am deeply grateful. I do hope that all the peace-loving countries will take heed of the voice of my people and provide for them a ray of light in the night of subjugation and oppression through which they are passing.

I am happy to note that in his speech in the Assembly on September 24, 1960, H.E. N. Krushchev called for the freedom of all colonial peoples. Unfortunately my country has been reduced to the status of a colonial country and I hope that along with other countries the USSR will also raise its powerful voice in support of the restoration of freedom to my country.

Between 1912 and 1950, there was not even a semblance of Chinese Authority in Tibet. There was a Chinese Mission in Tibet which arrived in 1934 to offer condolences on the death of the 13th Dalai Lama. This Mission was permitted to continue to stay in Tibet on the same footing as the Mission from Nepal and from the Government of India.

On numerous occasions after 1936 the officers of the Chinese Mission to Lhasa used travel via India to Tibet. On every occasion the Indian Government granted or refused transit visas after consulting the wishes of the Government of Tibet. In 1949 even this Mission was expelled from Tibet.

The claim of the Chinese suzerainty over Tibet is based on the 1907 Convention between Great Britain and Russia. It may be pointed out that Tibet was not a party to that Convention and was in no way bound by that Convention.

As the head of the Tibetan Government I say that what happened on October 7, 1950, was a flagrant act of aggression on the part of China against my country.

The Tibetan Government appealed to the United Nations for help. As a result of the defeat of the Tibetan army and after the efforts of Tibetan Government to get the help of the United Nations had failed, we were compelled to send a delegation to Peking. The delegation was compelled to sign what is known as the 17-point agreement on May 23, 1951.

The events since then and till my departure from Tibet in March 1959, are too well-known to require any detailed recounting. Even now refugees are coming into Nepal, Bhutan, Sikkim and India practically everyday.

In this connection may I draw the attention of the United Nations to the excellent reports on the question of Tibet published by the International Commission of Jurists. In the second report the distinguished Committee, that closely examined the question, came to the conclusion, inter alia, that Chinese authorities had been guilty of the Genocide within the meaning of the Genocide Convention. I trust that the United Nations will carefully examine the facts on which this conclusion is based and will take appropriate action to deal with this matter. Genocide, even apart from the Genocide Convention, has been recognised as a crime against International Law.

The fighting in Tibet against the occupiers and the oppressors is still going on. I appealed to the United Nations last year and I am making this appeal again in the hope that the United Nations will take appropriate measures to get China to vacate its aggression. In my opinion any measure short of this is not going to be of much help to my country where the Communist steamroller is everyday crushing out the freedom of my people.

China was not moved ; indeed, her attitude hardened and her reaction to the Dalai Lama's appeals to the United Nations was not that of "watch and wait" but that of "hold fast and go deep" as far as the country of Tibet was concerned. China's military expenditures were stepped up. The expenditures included the accumulation of military stockpiles and the revitalization of the Second Ministry of Machine Building, which has been in charge of arsenal and other types of military construction.

Chapter

5

The problem of the organisation of a region is that of the relationship between its subjects and the administrative apparatus. While the political and administrative set up in Jammu and Kashmir after the link between the State and the Indian Union was brought about in 1947 proved conducive to regional tensions, the governmental changeovers in 1953, 1964, 1971 and 1975 did not much help to remove these tensions.

As I want to refer to certain aspects of the Ladakh tangle, I need not discuss secessionist sentiments (in Kashmir valley) fed by communalism in Jammu which in turn is provoked by the fears aroused by the secessionists. Little attention was paid to the region of Ladakh between 1948 and 1952 as Sheikh Abdullah, the State Premier, was kept involved in crucial matters, including the accession issue, the threat posed to the integrity of the State on account of the leaderlessness of Jammu, the growth of communal and sectarian forces in Kashmir valley and Jammu and the inability of the ruling National Conference to remove misunderstanding among the people of Jammu on the question of Kashmir leader's attitude towards them. Although Ladakh leader, Kushak Bakula, was not politically able enough to understand how important it was for the Sheikh to ensure his

supremacy on the political plane during the period, he (the Kushak) met Pandit Nehru in 1952 and apprised him of bad economic situation in Ladakh and of the Sheikh's complete indifference to the needs and urges of the people of the border region. Nehru knew that the problem of Ladakh, as defined by the Kushak, was not as important as the one posed by the Sheikh and some other Kashmir leaders on the question of the State-Centre relations. Nehru's reaction to the Kushak's anxiety was that of "wait and watch". The Kushak waited and also watched until the Sheikh was deposed and arrested on 9 August 1953. Ladakh leader was not unhappy over the development. But Nehru was unhappy over all that led to the Sheikh's dismissal and arrest. In spite of his differences with the Sheikh, Nehru had a better appreciation of his (the Sheikh's) hold on the Kashmiri masses and, therefore, considered him a source of hope for India.

The successor regime with Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed as the Prime Minister of Kashmir could not give what Kushak Bakula wanted for Ladakh. And though several measures were taken during the Bakshi regime for developing the region, the Kushak was not fully satisfied. Ladakh leader and his followers wanted more and more incentives and assistance for the growth of influence and institutions of the Buddhist population in the region. But Bakshi could not afford to oblige the Kushak as his main task, following the removal of the Sheikh from Premiership, was to please the Muslim population in order to be able to retain power for a longer period. Minor development schemes formulated for Ladakh were taken in hand with the help of the Government of India without, of course, fixing priorities on the basis of population of Buddhists and non-Buddhists. But on more than one occasion, the Kushak felt that a section of Muslim leaders of the National Conference, encouraged by Bakshi, endeavoured to build up between Buddhists and non-Buddhists a barrier higher than the Karakoram range by paying more attention to the problems of the Muslim population in Ladakh.

Neither Nehru nor other ruling politicians in India attached any importance to the Kushak's woes between January and August 1962 when China posed serious problems for New Delhi. There were "further" border violations by China in January—

two Chinese officials accompanied by an interpreter and two platoon commanders crossed the Sino-Indian border and visited the village of Roi in south of Longju, and on 14 January, a Chinese patrol camped six to seven kilometres east of an Indian outpost near Daulat Beg Oldi in Ladakh. That was disclosed in the notes exchanged between the Governments of India and China protesting against the violation of territorial and air space. The notes, 12 in all, were placed before both Houses of Indian Parliament on Wednesday (May 2, 1962). In a lengthy note dated 30 April 1962, India while expressing her willingness to negotiate with the Chinese for a peaceful settlement of the boundary dispute, had made it clear that such negotiations could take place "only after the Chinese leave Indian territory". Denying the Chinese charge that the Government of India had adopted a "negative attitude" with regard to the Sino-Indian boundary dispute, the note asserted that despite Chinese aggression India had shown considerable restraint. The note reiterated that there was no Sino-Indian boundary problem of any consequence until 1959 when the Chinese Government claimed Indian territory. In reply, while stating that the door for negotiations was always open, the Chinese Government had warned the Government of India that its "rigid and threatening attitude" on the boundary question would certainly lead to no solution, would aggravate the unrest along the border and even augment the danger of clashes.

In its note of 18 April protesting against the intrusion into Indian territory in the eastern sector of the border in the second week of January, the Government of India said : "Two Chinese officials of Migyitum accompanied by an interpreter and two platoon commanders crossed the Sino-Indian border near Longju and visited the village of Roi. The Government of India has taken a serious notice of this unlawful intrusion into Indian territory which is contrary to the repeated assertions of the Government of China that their personnel have never violated the Sino-Indian border in the eastern sector. The Government of India regret that despite these solemn assertions, Chinese personnel have again intruded into Indian territory and caused fear and tension among the local inhabitants and hope that appropriate steps will be taken to ensure that similar intrusions

do not occur in future." Protesting against the violation of Bhutan's air space by Chinese aircraft, the Government of India in its note of 24 March said : "At 08.30 hours on November 27 last, a Chinese jet aircraft flew over Thimpu, Bhutan. Similar violations of air space over Bhutan had occurred on November 24 and 25 last when Chinese aircraft flew over Paro. The aircraft in question were observed approaching from a north-east direction. The Government of India urged the Chinese Government to take all necessary measures to avoid similar violation in future, which could have serious consequences."

Denying the Indian charge that Chinese aircraft flew over Sherathang in Sikkim on January 6 last, the Chinese Government said it had been established through detailed investigation that no Chinese aircraft had entered the Sikkim air space. In its note of March 7, the Chinese Government described the Indian charge as groundless and said that no Chinese aircraft had ever violated the air space of other countries. In its note of April 4, the Government of India reiterated the charge that India's air space had been violated by Chinese aircraft flying over Sherathang in Sikkim on January 6 and said the earlier protest on the subject had been lodged after full verification of facts. "Immediately after committing the violation, the aircraft flew back into Tibet region of China from whence it came". Reiterating that the airdrop on 14 January by an Indian aircraft had taken place about 20 kilometres from the illegal Chinese post set up on Indian territory, the Government of India, in its note of 17 April, said the supplies were intended for the regular Indian outpost situated at the track junction 12 kilometres south-southeast of Daulat Beg Oldi. Regarding the day of supply dropping mission the Indian note added : "There is no doubt that a Chinese patrol had pitched tents some three to four miles east of the Indian track junction outpost, violating the status quo and committing fresh intrusion into Indian territory." Rejecting the Chinese contention that "precisely at the Chinese post the Indian aircraft made the air-dropping," the Indian note said : "This view is neither consistent with fact nor with logic, for, surely it is not the intention of Indian air-drop missions to supply Chinese posts illegally set up on the Indian soil." Describing as a traversty of the truth the Chinese

charge that India had "repeatedly taken unilateral action to disrupt the status quo" the Indian note said : "It is the Government of China which has been guilty of systematic and continuous aggression into Indian territory and it is they who have sought to justify unlawful occupation by unwarranted territorial claims."

In a note dated March 20, the Chinese Government protested strongly against what it called 37 sorties by Indian aircraft into Chinese air space on various dates between December 4, 1961 and February 14, 1962 and said that since December last, intrusions by Indian aircraft into China's air space had become more serious than ever before. 24 sorties, the note added, had exceeded the alignment unilaterally claimed by India and some even intruded into the air space over Rudok, Gunsa, Toling, Gyanima and Parkha, which were all towns well within Tibet. Repudiating the Chinese charge of violation of Chinese air space by Indian aircraft, the Government of India, in its note of April 19, stated that many of these alleged air space violations related to the air space over Indian territory under unlawful Chinese occupation as had indeed been admitted in the Chinese note itself. Any protest from the Government of China on this account was, therefore, improper. India reiterated that there were strict instructions against Indian aircraft entering Chinese air space.

The Chinese Government, in its note of March 20, denied that Chinese aircraft had flown over Spiti, Chini and Jangi. It informed the Government of India that it was fully entitled to deal with any unidentified aircraft discovered in Indian air space without having to make any inquiries of the Chinese Government. The note stated that the Chinese Government had notified the Indian and Burmese Governments that there were at times aircraft of the USA and the "Chiang Kai-shek clique engaged in illegal activities" over the Sino-Indian and Sino-Burmese borders and expressed the hope that China, India and Burma would maintain common vigilance. Facts had proved that the Chinese Government was correct. The Burmese side, the note added, had shot down an aircraft of the "Chiang Kai-shek clique" within the Burmese border, a fact which was testified to by Nehru himself in his speech before the Rajya

Sabha on December 11 last. Reiterating that Chinese aircraft had violated Indian air space over Spiti, Chini and Jangi, the Government of India, in its note of April 23, said that India had protested earlier only after full verification. Dealing with the Chinese contention that the aircraft concerned could well belong to the USA or other third parties such as Taiwan, the Indian note said there would appear to be little evidence to support this view, particularly as all the three air space violations related to the western half of India's border.

In its note of March 22, the Chinese Government said the Government of India's contention that China should withdraw from the territory illegally occupied by her was tantamount to the summary rejection of the maintenance of status quo on the border. Stating that the Chinese had never seized a single inch of Indian territory nor would it ever do so, the note asked : "How can China which has suffered greatly from imperialist aggression for over a century possibly commit aggression against India ?"

According to the Chinese Government, the root cause of the Sino-Indian boundary dispute was British imperialism which it alleged expanded into China's Tibet and Sinkiang regions when India was not independent. As a result of the "aggressive policy pursued by British imperialism", the note said, a boundary dispute did exist between China and India. Even the Government of old China clearly expressed its non-recognition of the so-called McMahon Line. If even the Government of old China took such an attitude, how could one expect the Government of new China to recognise this line as legal ? the note asked. The note alleged that whether in eastern, western or middle sectors of the Sino-Indian boundary, it was India, not China, which had gone beyond its own territory and entered the the territory of the other side. The note stated that at the meeting of Indian and Chinese officials the Chinese officials proved with a great deal of factual material that the traditional customary line pointed out by China was well founded and that the alignment in Chinese maps published over the past several decades had in the main been consistent whereas the boundary line shown on "current". Indian maps was without a historical

or factual basis. Up to 1954 official Indian maps had generally confirmed that the boundary in the western sector was undetermined and had marked no boundary line at all. How had this boundary line which appeared in official Indian maps only in 1954 suddenly became a "well-known traditional boundary line" as contended by India? the note asked.

In a 10-page note of 30 April, the Government of India reiterated its case on the Sino-Indian boundary dispute and called upon China to vacate her aggression and create the essential conditions for peaceful negotiations. The note said that by stages since 1957 the Government of China had illegally occupied a large area which was always a part of India. Until this process of intrusion and occupation began, the Sino-Indian frontier had been peaceful. To say that a sino-Indian boundary dispute existed earlier than 1959 was contrary to facts and contrary to the relations which had developed between the two countries. It was only in 1959 that the Government of China suddenly faced the Government of India with a claim over nearly 50,000 square miles of Indian territory. In 1954, the Governments of India and China had negotiated an agreement on Tibet which contained a solemn assurance that each would respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the other. At that time the clear and precise alignment of India's northern boundary was well-known to the Government of China and there was no doubt or misgiving of any kind. The Government of India regretted that the Chinese Government continued to disregard the report of the officials of the two sides who examined the factual evidence regarding the Sino-Indian boundary problem. In fact the Government of China, not having seriously considered the report of the officials, was still reiterating without any evidence that the Indian territory in Ladakh now under their occupation was for long under Chinese jurisdiction.

Asserting that the territory in Ladakh, now under Chinese occupation, had always been under the administrative control of Indian authorities, the note said that evidence establishing the continuous and comprehensive exercise of Indian administration of this area over 100 years had been provided by the Government of India. The Government of China, on the other hand,

was unable to establish on the basis either of historical evidence or of administrative record that these area had at any time been under the effective jurisdiction of the Government of China or that they had ever been there prior to the "recent" unlawful occupation. This was also confirmed by the claim made by the Government of China itself that it had sent its forces through this area for the first time in 1950. In fact, there was evidence to show that the Chinese forces did not enter this area in 1950 and that the Government of China was now obviously antedating their aggression.

About the Chinese contention that British imperialism was the root cause of the boundary dispute between the two countries, the Indian note said records of British rule in India showed the British extended their authority over those territories which were historically and traditionally parts of India. These records also showed that the British, far from expanding into Tibet or the Sinkiang region, actually helped the Chinese to consolidate their authority in these regions. As a matter of fact the Government of India had given up its extra-territorial rights and privileges inherited from the British in Tibet under the agreement of 1954.

In view of the fact that the Government of China had gradually occupied a large part of Indian territory and of the numerous instances of violation by them of the boundary between the two countries, it was absurd for the Government of China to claim that it had all along maintained the status quo and its patrols had not been sent within 20 kilometres of its side of the boundary. The Government of China had in recent years shown scant respect for the status quo of the boundary between the two countries and had resorted to measures since 1959 to push its forces across the accepted boundary line to occupy Indian territory. "It is most regrettable that these activities which involved the loss of Indian lives and territory took place after the Sino-Indian agreement of 1954 which bound the two countries to respect each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty."

After dealing with the efforts made by India to maintain friendly relations with China and also to obtain a rightful place for the Government of China in international organisations and for creating stable and peaceful conditions over a wider region of Asia, the note said : "The Government of India regrets that its hopes and aspirations in this regard have been frustrated through lack of cooperation from the Government of China which has pursued policies in total disregard of the fundamental interests of the region and has created conditions of conflict and tension among the nations of Asia."

Denying the Chinese charge that the Government of India had adopted a negative attitude on the Sino-Indian boundary dispute, the note asserted that despite Chinese aggression the Government of India had shown considerable restraint and had taken various measures to promote a peaceful settlement by negotiation. "In India there is a long tradition of peace and non-violence. It was China's quarrel with India", the note ended.

In a statement in the Lok Sabha on Monday (August 6, 1962) on the situation in Ladakh, Prime Minister Nehru said that despite Chinese aggressive behaviour and inconsistency between their professions and practice, India desired to settle the differences with China by peaceful negotiations. "At the same time we will not hesitate to meet any threat to our territorial integrity with firmness and, where necessary, by force", he declared. Nehru said that the "latest" Chinese reply received on Sunday to an Indian note of July 26 suggesting measures for relaxation of the present tension and for creation of the right climate for negotiations was "disappointing". He stated : "It is rather disappointing that the Chinese Government continues to repeat the charges made by them and maintain their position as stated previously." He read out the last paragraph of the Chinese note which said that the Chinese Government approved of the suggestion of the Indian Government for further discussion on the Sino-Indian boundary question on the basis of the report of the officials of the two Governments. There need not be, the Chinese note added, any pre-conditions for such discussions. As a matter of fact, unless the Indian

side stopped advancing into Chinese territory there would be no relaxation of tension, the note said. The Chinese note said that since neither the Chinese nor the Indian Government wanted war and since both Governments wanted to settle the boundary question through negotiations, further discussion on the Sino-Indian boundary question on the report of the officials of the two countries should not be put off any further. The Chinese Government, the note added, proposed that such discussion should be held as soon as possible and the date and other procedural matters for these discussions should be immediately decided upon by consultations through diplomatic channels. The note said that the Chinese Government hoped that the Indian Government would give a positive consideration to the proposal and reply "at an early date".

Indian Premier said : "During the last session of Parliament, I referred to measures taken by the Government to stop further Chinese advance into Indian territory. These steps continue to be taken by our Government and a number of military posts have been established. It may be said that it is very difficult for the Chinese forces to advance now because of the establishment of Indian posts at various points without an actual conflict between the two. It is in this context that the strong and almost abusive Chinese notes must be interpreted. We have in all our notes repeatedly pointed out to the Chinese authorities the dangers inherent in aggressive activities and our determination to defend our borders even though we will avoid doing anything to precipitate a clash. In recent weeks, Chinese troops in superior strength have sometimes come up close to our posts with a view to harassing and intimidating them. This happened in the Galwan valley. Our men exercised the utmost self-restraint and exhibited exemplary courage and patience in the face of grave provocation from the Chinese forces. The Chinese forces thereupon retired to some extent, but Indian and Chinese forces in this area continue to be in close proximity to each other though no untoward incident has occurred so far in this area." Nehru said that in the lower reaches of the Chip Chap valley an Indian patrol while performing routine duties was ambushed by Chinese forces and attacked

by rifle, machine-gun and mortar fire. Indian soldiers had to return the fire in self-defence. Two members of the Indian patrol were wounded in the incident. Another incident had occurred in the Pangong area. Nehru said : "A feature of Chinese propaganda in these incidents has been to allege that Indian troops have encircled Chinese forces and fired at them while the Chinese are reported to have waved and shouted to our troops not to attack. We have found that these allegations are baseless and merely attempts to cover up Chinese aggressive activity against our posts and patrols. The Chinese notes display characteristic ambivalence. The first part of the note generally contains baseless allegations, often in exaggerated and even abusive language while the latter part refers to the Chinese desire to settle our border differences by peaceful negotiations. The recent increase of tension in the Ladakh region has been direct result of intensified Chinese military activity which is inconsistent with their professions of desire to settle this question by peaceful negotiations. We in India are, because of our bockground and temperament, peaceful by nature. The mounted Chinese aggression on our territory came, therefore, as a shock and surprise to us. Despite Chinese aggressive behaviour and the inconsistency between their professions and practice we still desire to settle our differences with China by peaceful discussions and negotiations. At the same time we will not hesitate to meet any threat to our territorial integrity with firmness and, where necessary, by force."

Indian Premier said : "In a note we sent to the Government of China on May 14, 1962, we made concrete suggestions regarding mutual withdrawals to the boundaries claimed by the two sides in the Ladakh region to create the necessary atmosphere for the settlement of disputes by peaceful negotiations. The Chinese did not agree to it. The incidents during the last few months have only created further tension. We have in our recent note dated July 26, 1962, again pointed out to the Chinese Government the necessity of avoiding incidents and reducing tensions and of making an adequate response to the constructive suggestions made by us to create the necessary favourable climate for further talks on the boundary question."

The text of the Indian note of July 26 : "The Chinese Government appears to have been misinformed about the facts of the incidents which occurred on July 20. Full and accurate details of the two incidents that occurred on July 20 have been given by the Government of India in their note of July 22, 1962, presented to the Chinese Charged' Affairs in New Delhi. The Government of India has nothing to add to the facts given in this note. Tension has been increasing in the past few months on the north-western frontier of India as a result of the recent establishment of a number of Chinese military posts and the increasing aggressive activities of the Chinese forces in that area. Details of Chinese posts recently established in the Indian territory in the Ladakh region and instances of intensive and aggressive patrolling in this area have been given in the notes presented by this Government on May 14, June 6 and 16, July 6, 10, 12 and 14, 1962. Those notes had also drawn the attention of the Chinese Government to the dangers of these aggressive activities. The Government of India has in their various notes stressed the importance of avoiding clashes and of creating the appropriate climate for settlement of the differences regarding the alignment of the Sino-Indian border by peaceful negotiations. Not only has there been no positive response from the Government of China to these suggestions, but the local Chinese authorities have, during the last few months, established several new military posts in Indian territory and stepped up their aggressive patrolling activity in this region. The Chinese Government has, in their note of July 21, stated that China is not willing to fight with India and the Sino-Indian border question can be settled only through negotiations. The Government of India fully reciprocates this desire for settlement by peaceful negotiations. The factual history of the activities of the local Chinese forces in the Ladakh region is, however, not consistent with this desire for settlement by negotiations expressed by the Chinese Government. The local Chinese forces have even in the last few months established several new posts and resorted to aggressive patrolling in Indian areas which lie west of even the 1956 Chinese map claim line which the Prime Minister, Mr. Chou En-lai, told the Prime Minister of India 'correctly shows the traditional boundary between the two countries in this sector'. The details

of the correct international boundary in the Ladakh region have been given with full supporting documentation by the Indian side in the meetings of the officials of the two sides whose report is now before the two Governments Even if the Government. of China is inclined to contest this boundary, the Government of India fails to understand why the Government of China does not restrain its forces from going beyond even their 1956 Chinese map claim line which is capable of easy and quick verification. It is true that the Government of India contests the validity of the 1956 Chinese map claim line, but the Chinese local forces should not go beyond their own claim line confirmed by the Prime Minister, Mr. Chou En-lai. The Government of India is prepared as soon as the current tensions have eased and the appropriate climate is created, to enter into further discussions on the India-China boundary question on the basis of the report of the officials as contemplated during the meeting of the Prime Minister, Mr. Chou En-lai, with the Prime Minister of India in 1960. The Government of India hopes the Government of China will give a positive response on the concrete suggestions made by the Government of India for relaxation of the current tensions and for creation of the right climate for negotiations."

The whole period really was one of general confusion. To many in India, especially in the State's three regions—Ladakh, Kashmir and Jammu—the situation between August and December 1962 seemed to drift in consonance with certain movements of planets. They felt most of the planets had become deceptive. Not that they had engaged themselves in the method of calculating and erecting a nodal horoscope of people of places, but as they found the shape of events below and behind their expectations they believed that the planetary system was far from satisfactory.

Public attention in New Delhi and also from Lakhinpore to Ladakh came to be focussed on a statement by Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed regarding "some burning issues concerning Jammu and Kashmir". The statement, given by the State Premier to an Indian news agency, IPA, was splashed on the front page by

two pro-Government dailies in Srinagar. The statement, which was released on 13 August 1962, quoted Bakshi having emphasized that Kashmir was "still very much an international issue". In the course of the interview with IPA, Bakshi said : "The threat from China and from Pakistan backed by the United States and other powers persists. Communal and reactionary elements within the State and in other parts of India are active. Sheikh Abdullah, though not as important as before, still poses a serious political problem for the state, which could not be dealt with purely on a law and order question." According to the published report, the State Premier, when asked about the special status that Jammu and Kashmir enjoyed under the Constitution of India, remarked : "Let Article 370 (dealing with Kashmir) be scrapped, for all I care". But he warned that before taking such a step all its implications should be fully examined. The news agency further reported Bakshi as having said that Article 370 gave validity to the State's voluntary accession to the Indian Union, as determined by the freely elected Constituent Assembly of Jammu and Kashmir. According to the news agency, Bakshi was not in favour of the ruling National Conference converting itself into a unit of the Indian National Congress.

Bakshi's statement embarrassed New Delhi. If Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed had to answer some awkward questions during his visit to Delhi in the beginning of September 1962, he was himself to blame. The report of the interview came as a surprise, if not a shock, to those who were long accustomed to hearing him talk of Kashmir's irrevocable link with India and of Sheikh Abdullah having been finished as a political force in the State. Bakshi's reference to the State's special status was regarded as uncalled for inasmuch as in July 1962 Nehru had publicly declared that the Indian Government had no intention of coercing Kashmir into giving it up. But the issue, as a slogan, had political potentialities and the Kashmir Premier could not resist the temptation of exploiting it. Bakshi, who lacked courage to ignore Nehru's anger and resentment over his statement, did issue some minor clarifications to the report but in the situation that time the corrections carried little conviction

with the public inasmuch as they were issued 17 days after the original interview. Bakshi's statement provided a weapon which was used against him by his critics in Kashmir, Jammu and Ladakh. In Kashmir, three leaders—G.M. Sadiq, D.P. Dhar and Mir Qasim—functioned as New Delhi's informers with the main task of building walls between the Bakshi camp and Nehru, whereas integrationists (in the name of Praja Parishad) of Jammu pressed for abrogation of Article 370 and complete merger of the State with the rest of India with the ostensible purpose of killing two birds with one stone : First, of course, was to embarrass Bakshi in the Muslim-majority Kashmir valley. Second, to make their presence and influence felt.

In Ladakh, a large section of the Muslim population seemed to support Bakshi whereas the Buddhists, led by Kushak Bakula, wanted change of Government. Ladakh unit of the National Conference party got divided ; the division followed the Kushak's failure to move a resolution, at a meeting of the party workers at Leh, against Bakshi's "controversial" statement to IPA. After Bakshi's visit to Delhi in the beginning of September, the Kushak thought of quitting the National Conference. But that was not allowed to happen by D.P. Dhar who, following his meetings with Nehru and Krishna Menon on the "growing threat from China", talked to the Ladakh leader on certain aspects of the situation and told him to ignore Bakshi's blunt remark : "I know you (Kushak Bakula) are not doing any useful service to me". This development was followed by a communication sent by Kushak Bakula to Nehru. Text of the communication :

Sept. 15, 1962.

(Strictly Confidential)

My dear Panditji,

I am fully conscious of the fact that recent development on the Sino-Indian border and the growing threat from the Chinese forces to the country's territorial integrity have engaged your attention.

Equally conscious I am of the reality that the Sino-Indian boundary question has, of late, assumed a tremendous importance in view of India's legal and constitutional hold on the entire region of Ladakh.

But as certain internal developments in this State have been allowed to drift, I deem it necessary to bring a few lines for your kind attention.

Firstly, I have been insulted by Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed in presence of a group of National Conference workers and leaders a few days ago when, for no fault of mine, he was unreasonable and indiscreet in his remarks against my functioning as the party leader in the Ladakh region. Although I told him that he had been misinformed and that I have not been quoted properly, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed remarked : "I know that you are not doing any useful service to me. You go and tell Panditji all about your troubles."

Secondly, the party—National Conference—in Ladakh is not being permitted to function freely and in a democratic manner. Both Bakshi and his cousin, Bakshi Abdul Rashid, have been instigating some party workers against me. The result is that a division in the Ladakh unit of the National Conference has been created with the main purpose of embarrassing me.

Thirdly, I have not been able to find the State Premier in a mood to appreciate genuine difficulties being faced by the people of Ladakh, especially Buddhists, in the absence of a planned economic programme for the region. I had an opportunity to discuss with Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, not long ago, certain facets of Ladakh's economic backwardness in light of the Ladakhis' demand for greater aid and attention from the Government. But it was unfortunate that Bakshi flared up during the discussion and remarked : "I am not here to serve you and your community alone. I have to think of other communities also". At no stage during my meeting with him I had referred to the Ladakhis'

demand on communal lines. I was shocked to find him interested only in the welfare of the Muslim community.

Fourthly, you had, not long ago, advised me to take Mr. G.M. Sadiq and Mr. D.P. Dhar into confidence so far as the question of finding a solution to the reasonable demands of Ladakhis was concerned. Recently, on more than one occasion, I contacted Mr. Sadiq and Mr. Dhar. Intriguing as it was both of them wanted me to forget Ladakh for the time being and instead cooperate with them in the task of demolishing the Bakshi regime. They did drop a hint that you were also interested in what they have been endeavouring to seek. I want your guidance on the subject. I also want you to direct Bakshi to be careful and cautious in his statements and pronouncements on political matters.

Fifthly, I feel—and my supporters also hold the same opinion—that it is high time when Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed should be taken to task for the manner in which he has detailed some of his lieutenants to politicalise the atmosphere in Ladakh in order to draw a line between Buddhists and non-Buddhists of the region. Bakshi's supporters have been found indulging in anti-social activities by conveying to a section of the Muslim population of Ladakh that abrogation of Article 370 of the Indian Constitution could endanger their "stability and future".

My fault, as pointed out by Bakshi and his cousin Bakshi Rashid, is that I should not have told some of my associates and supporters that Article 370, being a temporary and transitional measure, has to be replaced by a permanent and more satisfactory arrangement. I have been convinced by the argument of some accessionists that the present imperium in imperio status claimed by Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed for Kashmir is a point of irritation, and the Centre's lack of control and supervision over the administration of the State, while fulfilling financial, defence and every other kind of obligation towards it, irks Indian public opinion.

I strongly feel that your Government should exercise the same rights and powers over Kashmir that it does in regard to the remaining States of the Indian Union.

I have some more important points to communicate to you. But anxious as I am for an early meeting with you, I feel at this stage that I should not lengthen this letter ; I would apprise you of the entire situation in the region I belong to when I get an opportunity to meet you.

With deep regards,

Yours sincerely,
Sd.
(Kushak Bakula)

Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru,
Prime Minister of India,
New Delhi.

Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed's opposition to the abrogation of Article 370 was motivated by local considerations and not with any intention to do any harm to the State's relationship with the Centre. Indian Home Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri's statement in Parliament (after Bakshi's statement to IPA) defending the "present status" of Kashmir vis-a-vis the Indian Union and deploring imputation of motives to Bakshi was welcomed by some circles in the State as "very realistic". Shastri in his statement had made clear the Centre's intention to gradually integrate the State with India. In the circumstances when there was little willingness on the part of any reckonable force in Kashmir for abrogation of Article 370, the Government of India could not force it. It had not imposed its will on any other part of the country and it did not do so in the case of predominantly Muslim Kashmir. The Praja Parishad in Jammu, of course, did not agree with this reasoning as its voice could not be dismissed as alien. But it remained a cry in the wilderness as it did not inspire confidence among local Muslims. It had not a single primary member in the Kashmir valley and Ladakh. The Parishad demand for abrogation of Article 370 only strengthened Muslims' apprehensions locally. Before the month of September ran out a session of the Standing Committee of the

All-India Newspaper Editors' Conference was held in Srinagar. Bakshi's address to the participants sounded much like his old speeches. That Kashmir's accession to India was a "closed chapter" had been said before but considering the serious misgivings that his earlier utterances had created in some minds it needed to be repeated as categorically as he did. It was perhaps uncharitable to think, as some undoubtedly did, that the Kashmir Premier's loyalty to India was under strain. Those who knew him personally could, even after his ill-considered remarks in August, confidently discount any such possibility. What prompted Bakshi to make the remarks about the State's accession and special status was obviously the exigencies of local politics. Speaking at a meeting to bid farewell to editors on 28 September, Bakshi said : "We are wedded to the belief that Kashmir lives while India lives and that Kashmir has no future except as a part of the Indian nation. As a humble soldier of Jawaharlal Nehru, I am ever willing to discharge my duties at any front, whether it is NEFA, Kerala, U.P. or Ladakh."

Throughout the period—October, November and December—the reports of the Chinese invasion were greeted in India, and in Ladakh also, with anger and determination. But there had also been some murmurs to suggest that India should have avoided this clash with, to quote Nehru's description, "a powerful and unscrupulous opponent". Curiously much of this criticism came from those who previously never missed an opportunity of berating the Prime Minister for his "timid" approach to the Chinese and urging more decisive action to vacate the aggression in Ladakh. When he addressed the nation Nehru spoke in a tone of unmistakable gravityand in describing China used language that he had probably never used before for any other country. Nevertheless, in Delhi one did not uniformly sense the "great crisis" to which the Premier had referred. It was curious that on the day Tawang was being threatened the Indian Defence Minister, Krishna Menon, chose to travel to Bombay to appeal to the people, inter alia, to surrender gold to the Reserve Bank.

In Ladakh and NEFA, the Chinese acted with a degree of ruthlessness ; the Chinese caught India in a state of relative unpreparedness. India was slow in mobilising her manpower and resources. China did not move to the NEFA and Ladakh borders overnight thousands of soldiers and vast quantities of modern weapons merely in consequence of anything said in India. In NEFA, they had built roads up to the border itself, organised elaborate lines of supply and collected deadly weapons in quantities. In Ladakh, the Chinese forces had been mobilised following the opening of at least 50 new posts and concentration of Chinese troops in several areas, including the Chip Chap, Karakash and Galwan valleys.

Planning for all that had happened had started some years ago, perhaps even before the Chinese took Tibet. The attack on India was bound to come. Krishna Menon's cordial parleys in Geneva did not delay it ; Nehru's critical utterances about China did not hasten it. Parliament in New Delhi has been given an exaggerated picture of the strength of India's security forces in Ladakh and NEFA. India's preparations had suffered for two reasons. First, the imperative need to build a defence line quickly in Ladakh where the Chinese had been advancing into Indian territory at a disturbing pace. Secondly, the firm belief for long entertained by the Indian Defence Minister that the real threat to India's security came from Pakistan.

It was no secret (spokesmen of the Indian Government themselves had admitted it) that Chinese weapons were superior to those employed by Indian soldiers. Their mortars and guns had a longer range than those used by the Indian army. The Chinese troops had automatic rifles against the ones of the last war (1947-48) that Indians had. If in the emergency India found herself with inadequate quantities of modern arms and weapons it was due partly to her endeavour to be self-sufficient in all her requirements. As an objective self-sufficiency seemed attractive but for a country like India whose industrial resources were so meagre, the march towards it resulted in delays. Also, Indian defence production at that stage seemed to suffer from inadequate co-ordination. While on the one hand defence factories manufactured items like coffee percolators because they had

spare capacity, on the other, manufacture of certain standard arms was behind schedule.

Nehru personally was taken wholly unawares on the emotional plane. Much of the edifice he had worked so long and so hard to build crashed around him. He had continued his efforts for peace—and China's admission to the U.N.—even when that country had forcibly occupied a very large area in Ladakh five years earlier. In December he even offered to refer the border question to the International Court. China's replies to all his attempts were fresh threats, fantastic accusations, and further demands. India's indignation at China's betrayal rose to a high pitch and there were widespread demands for the dismissal of the Defence Minister, Krishna Menon, considered mainly responsible for India's military unpreparedness. Indeed, this was the first time that Nehru's Cabinet colleagues and the Parliamentary Party members—usually anxious not to displease him—had stood up to him. He tried to compromise by taking over the Defence portfolio himself and making Menon Minister for Defence Production. The indignation against the latter proved too strong, however, and in the middle of November he had to go.

Later that month, the Chinese suddenly announced a unilateral cease-fire and started pulling out of NEFA. This took the whole world by surprise. Though India did not accept the cease-fire, she found herself unable to do anything about it. Nehru was not taken in by the withdrawals—the Chinese were still in Ladakh—and warned his countrymen that they would have to prepare for a lengthy war. His disillusionment with China was offset by the proof of warm friendship he received elsewhere. The Commonwealth to a country—almost—gave him unqualified support. One exception was Ghana, whose President wrote two carping letters to Macmillan protesting against British arms aid to India. The latter administered a brusque rebuke to him. Another exception was, of course, Pakistan.

The promptness with which Nehru's appeal for arms was

dealt with had rarely been equalled in World War II. On October 29, nine days after the invasion, the first consignment of arms from Britain arrived. On November 3 came the first batch from the USA. Britain signed an agreement with India undertaking to supply her with certain weapons free of cost up to an agreed financial limit. The USA also signed an agreement. Both countries offered to give any assistance India might require. Macmillan sent Duncan Sandys, Commonwealth Relations Secretary, Gen. Sir Richard Hull, Chief of the Imperial General Staff, and others, and Kennedy sent a team of defence officials headed by Averell Harriman, Assistant Secretary of State, to study India's defence needs and other matters.

Other Commonwealth countries as well as France, West Germany and others sent arms and non-military aid. Russia sent four MiG planes—promised before the invasion—some time after the Chinese cease-fire. Their value was considered largely symbolic. On 6 December six Afro-Asian countries met in Colombo to find ways of solving what they chose to call India's border disputes with China. After initial bickerings, the conference agreed on a formula. Though it equated India with China and hardly did justice to India on other matters also, Nehru accepted the formula. China did not.

In December 1962, past deficiencies were analysed candidly and remedies for futre suggested with equal clarity in the course of a series of meetigs Nehru held with the Indian defence experts and field commanders. It was felt during the course of discussion that the biggest single need of the future was more and better equipment. The idea was put across to the defence experts and top achelons of the Indian Finance Ministry by Nehru himself. From Leh, the district headquarters of Ladakh, to the most isolated outpost, there was unanimity that the Chinese gains were due more to the superiority of their equipment than even to superior numbers. The Indian army suffered from the inferiority of the single action non-automatic rifle. Following the cessation of the Sino-Indian hostilities, Indian soldiers in Ladakh insisted on the immediate supply of automatic rifles. Adequate artillery support was another imperative of adequate defence against Chinese aggression. Even at Chushul, India's biggest

forward garrison during the October war the Chinese had 24 artillery pieces including 12 Russian P-76 tanks ; Indian soldiers had much less.

A controversy was sparked off between Kushak Bakula and the disgruntled group in the ruling National Conference in March 1963 over the allegations made by former against "far from encouraging" attitude of G.M. Sadiq Education Minister, towards the "legitimate demand" for opening a college at Leh and providing additional moral and material support to Ladakh students in different educational institutions in Srinagar. The disgruntled group, led by Sadiq, was known for its activity and expression against Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed. The group was invariably taken notice of as its chief organisers, besides Sadiq, were G.L. Dogra, D.P. Dhar and Mir Qasim. It was in presence of Dhar that Sadiq told the Kushak in Jammu that it was not proper that you "approach Panditji (Nehru) every time with petty problems that you should not be under this impression that Ladakh alone has problems which deserve immediate attention of all in India". This development occurred some days after Kushak Bakula had sent a communication to Nehru. Text of communication :

February 10, 1963.

My dear Panditji,

All is not well in Kashmir. After the formation of the new State Cabinet in April last year, the air has become thick with rumours of a rift in the Government. Repeated denial of these rumours by Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed has only deepened the impression that Mr. G.M. Sadiq and his three associates—Mr. G. L. Dogra, Mr. D. P. Dhar and Syed Mir Qasim—are opposed to the State Premier.

Public criticism has developed an edge as the administration of Jammu and Kashmir is far from a model. The National Conference is divided into two groups, one led by Bakshi Saheb and another headed by Sadiq Saheb. While affairs in the Secretariat are far from satisfactory, almost all Ministers are apparently involved in one intrigue or another.

I feel extremely dejected as little attention is paid to the legitimate problems of the people of Ladakh following the October war with China. Recently I had separate meetings with Bakshi Saheb, Mr. Sadiq and Mr. Dhar on these problems. But I did not find them sympathetic to the needs of the region of Ladakh. They conveyed this impression to me that they had "much more important issues to attend to at this stage". They did not spell out the issues.

When I told them that, during your visit to Kashmir last year, you had stressed the need for giving greater attention to Ladakh, I was surprised to learn that these leaders had other matters which deserve greater attention.

I have been shocked by the behaviour of senior functionaries in the Jammu and Kashmir Secretariat. They have shown scant regard to my proposals and files concerning Ladakh. These officers and Ministers have not yet realized the importance of the Ladakh region following the October war ; they expect the Indian Army alone to bring about economic and social transformation in the Land of the Lamas.

I know—indeed, the countrymen are aware of the fact that the role of our Army in defending Ladakh cannot be underestimated. But the Army alone cannot be assigned the responsibility of looking after Ladakh and its people. Local Government has to get itself fully involved in the task of restructuring the Ladakh society.

I, therefore, request you to ask the State Premier and all his Cabinet colleagues to employ appropriate measure to improve living conditions of the Ladakhis.

My assistant, Sonam Wangyal, who will deliver this letter to you has been briefed by me to give you more details of the issues arising from the State Government's failure to

understand how important it is to hold and reconstruct the Land of the Lamas.

Wishing you best of health.

With deep regards,

Yours sincerely,

(Sd.) Kushak Bakula.

Land-locked region of Ladakh was ignorant of the development on the political plane, in Kashmir and the rest of India between April and October 1963. The Congress Party in India and National Conference in Kashmir State had lost prestige. Nehru had diagnosed the Party's ailment. The cure was, however, prescribed only after he was able to rope in Kamaraj. Nehru wanted some controversial leaders, including Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, to give up high offices and work for nursing the party back to health. When the Congress adopted the Kamaraj Plan the progressive group in the National Conference headed by G.M. Sadiq got overjoyed to learn that Bakshi had, in a spirit of bravado declared to step down. Nehru was not unhappy; indeed, he encouraged him to do so. Bakshi's apple-cart was upset soon after his resignation was accepted by Nehru. While high office of Congress President had come seeking Kamaraj, in Kashmir, G.M. Sadiq who went in search of it was frustrated. The Premiership of Kashmir had eluded him. Just when success seemed within his grasp his opponents, led by Bakshi, pulled the rug from under his feet in what he regarded as treacherous manner.

That Sadiq headed only the minority group inside the National Conference was not unknown to Nehru and Lal Bahadur Shastri when they extracted a promise from the outgoing Premier and party strong man, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, to sponsor him as his successor. Bakshi was alleged to have managed through underhand manoeuvrings and objectionable tactics to foil the progressive group in the ruling party from coming to power and despite the advice of Nehru to read the writing on the wall, he succeded in getting a government of his own proteges reconstituted in the State with Shamsuddin

as Prime Minister. Of all the people and parties, a group of Buddhists, led by Kushak Bakula, and a batch of Kargil Muslim workers of National Conference supporting Aga Ibrahim welcomed the installation of Shamsuddin as premier of the State. While the Kushak had no knowledge of the promise extracted from Bakshi by Nehru and Shastri to sponsor Sadiq as his successor, Ibrahim was made to believe that Sadiq, though a Muslim was a Communist and, therefore, against the growth of religious institutions. Another factor which made the Kushak to look at Shamsuddin with hopeful eyes was unusual importance attached to the former before the latter began making preparations for undertaking a trip to Ladakh.

Kushak Bakula and his Buddhist followers received a set-back on the political plane in Ladakh during the agitation launched in Kashmir soon after the disappearance of Prophet Mohammed's holy hair from the Hazratbal mosque in Srinagar on 27 December 1963. While the administration in Kashmir valley got paralysed as a result of huge demonstrations, small processions were also organised by Muslims in some parts of Ladakh to mourn the loss of the sacred relic. Buddhists did not understand the importance of the issue and nor did they know the fact that religion occupied the first place in a Muslim's scheme of values. As they remained aloof and did not come out to carry black flags, a section of the Muslim population of the region felt hurt. And although the relic was recovered in the beginning of January, Kushak Bakula could not get away from various allegations levelled by a group of Muslim representatives of Ladakh against his "deliberate attempt seeking to draw a line between Buddhists and non-Buddhists". Certain irritations over the Kushak's inability to know the importance of the prophets relic were uncalled for inasmuch as he neither directed his Buddhists followers to remain aloof nor expressed his surprise over the manner in which a number of Ladakhi Muslims organised processions to mourn the loss of the relic.

Kushak Bakula was not disturbed ; he had planned to seek Shamsuddin's support for removing doubts in the mind of critics in Ladakh. But the situation, after the recovery of the relic took a different turn when Lal Bahadur Shastri, Indian

Minister without Portfolio, came to Srinagar on 30 January to make an on the spot study to help in doing away with the controversy over the question of identification of the holy relic, and to execute Nehru's scheme for bringing about change of the local Government. Immediately after his arrival, Shastri had a 45-minute meeting with Shamsuddin. Shastri's second meeting with Shamsuddin late in the night on 30 January made the latter uneasy. Great significance was attached to Shastri's long meeting with Maulana Masoodi and six other members of the Action Committee on 31 January. Shastri had also meetings with Sadiq, Qasim and D.P. Dhar and Bakshi Gulam Mohammed. Shamsuddin had to step down under the compelling circumstances in February 1964. Sadiq was installed as Shamsuddin's successor on 28 February in Jummu. With his arrival on the political scene as the head of a new Government a new chapter was opened in Kashmir history. He enjoyed Nehru's unqualified support ; indeed, Nehru and Shastri were of the opinion that Sadiq's political thinking and vision were not confined to the boundares of Jammu and the Valley of Kashmir. They had been convinced that Sadiq believed in the irrevocable nature of the State's integration with India not as a piece of political expediency, but as a matter of intellectual conviction.

Nehru breathed his last on 27 May 1964. His death shocked the State of Jammu and Kashmir. Sadiq looked extremely upset when he brought a portion of Nehru's ashes to Srinagar for immersion on 8 June. Kushak Bakula was seen weeping when the departed leader's ashes were taken by him to Ladakh for the immersion ceremony. Ladakhis reacted to Nehru's death with a feeling of personal bereavement as the population there, especially Buddhist, took a possessive pride in his being the "true lover" of the Buddhist homeland. The Kushak did not take long to come closer to India's new Prime Minister, Lal Bahadur Shastri. The Kushak met Shastri twice to stress the need for representation to a Ladakhi in the Council of Ministers headed by Sadiq. It was on 26 July that Kushak Bakula was included in the Sadiq Ministry as a Minister of State. The Kushak, however, did not seem to be fully satisfied ; his grievance was that while hardly any file was put up before him, Sadiq had been unwilling to accept him as a leader of Ladakh.

Chapter 6

Every passion gives a particular cost to the countenance, and is apt to discover itself in some feature or the other. Tradition-ridden and religious-minded people, G. M. Sadiq often felt, were like two parts of a puzzle set down side by side and which could not be made fit. Naturally, therefore, Sadiq was not disturbed by the development which led Kushak Bakula of Ladakh to express his desire to quit the Ministry. Bespectacled Sadiq did not screw up and stretch his eyes as he was a strategist eternally absorbed in his subtle schemes.

When the Sadiq Ministry was further expanded on 22 October 1964 to accommodate G. L. Dogra, Mohammed Ayub Khan and Pir Gias-ud-Din as Cabinet rank Ministers and Major Piar Singh and Ali Mohammed Tariq as Ministers of State, a controversy began following the letters of resignation submitted by Kushak Bakula and Sardar Harbans Singh Azad. Bakula and Azad made it plain that they did not want to work in the Ministry inasmuch as they had been ignored and their juniors elevated in the Council of Ministers.

Kushak Bakula tip-toed back to his place with a worried frown. True, owing to his unsystematic reading his association

of ideas was odd. But his desire to bring the Ladakh region under the direct control of the Government of India found an expression, for the first time, during a meeting he had with a senior officer of the Government of India in Srinagar a few days after he submitted the letter of resignation. The Indian official was in Kashmir on a week-long fact-finding mission following the two developments, first related to the arrest of a former Prime Minister, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, and second concerned the rift in the ruling party in the wake of resignation by the Kushak and Sardar Harbans Singh.

The Indian official kept himself busy as a bee; he met a number of people from various political and social groups; he had meetings with some individuals including journalists, lawyers, businessmen and student leaders. The official prepared a lengthy note on his impressions and assessment of men and matters in Kashmir State. I do not know—nor did he divulge—as to what happened to his note and for whom was it prepared. Some portions of the note are being reproduced here to explain how some men and matters were at that time. Text of these portions of the note :

1. "If one were asked to epitomize in one word the existing political situation in the Kashmir State, 'disturbing' would that word have to be. All is not well in Kashmir. It was hoped that the State Premier Sadiq would devise ways and means to mobilise pro-India forces, including the ruling National Conference, to weaken, if not embitter, anti-India groups...... A student of politics, if asked to study the situation objectively and carefully, will come to the conclusion that pro-plebiscite campaign has gained considerable momentum in Kashmir......

2. "After Sadiq was installed as the Premier, assurances were held to the people ; Sadiq and his colleagues, especially Mir Qasim, D.P. Dhar and Trilochan Dutta, spoke much to ameliorate economic condition of the people......They have not been able to conquer hearts of the people. True, the Sadiq Government has

already, removed curbs, for the first time, on freedom of speech and assembly in Jammu and Kashmir. But following the release of Sheikh Abdullah in April this year, it was felt that a storm was released............ And although the local Government wanted to infuse a new sense of hope and confidence among the people and forge 'intimate links' with their 'brethren' in the rest of the country, it has practically failed during the last eight months. During this period the situation changed at a faster speed, but not in favour of India and her supporters in Kashmir State......

3. "With the release of Sheikh Abdullah and his associates, especially Afzal Beg, all those political groups (opposed to the State's accession to India) threw down the glove, and the repeated demand for a 'plebiscite and grant of right of self-determination' to the Kashmiris knew no restrictions...... Inhability of the Sadiq Government to consolidate the pro-Indian platform in the wake of removal of restrictions on civil liberties, has enabled pro-plebiscite groups to dominate the political scene...

4. "Though much was said by Sadiq and his colleagues in the Cabinet in recent months to 'reorganise and revitalize' the National Conference (which suffered a serious set-back following the disappearance of the Prophet's holy hair), little has been done to reoccupy those platforms and 'Halqas' (previously held by the National Conference) which are in the possession of the Plebiscite Front and Action Committee since January 1964... Leaders of the National Conference do not have the courage to come out in main thoroughfares of Srinagar to organise public meetings. During the last eight months not a single meeting was addressed by Sadiq, Qasim and D.P. Dhar in any of the main thoroughfares of the Srinagar city. True, Qasim addressed a public gathering to mourn the death of Mr. Nehru. But that meeting in Lal Chowk,

Srinagar, was organised at the initiative of Mohammed Shafi Qureshi... And while leaders of the National Conference attempted to make their presence felt by holding a two-day convention of the party on 12 August 1964, they failed to accomplish their target and to break bones of the formidable forces poised against them. The convention lacked enthusiasm. Many of the delegates, especially those who had come from villages, seemed particular about food.

5. "Many people in Kashmir, including accessionists, are not satisfied with the functioning of the Sadiq Ministry. Sadiq, Mir Qasim, D. P. Dhar, Trilochan Dutta and other henchmen of the Kashmir Premier have been saying since March 1964 that 'one of the major objectives of the Government is to progressively build up for the State a highly efficient, healthy and sound administration'. . . Suprisingly enough, those officers and heads of departments who are known for their corrupt practices have not been touched so far ; in fact, some of them have been assigned key-posts in the administration.

6. "Though it has already been stressed upon the employees of the Government that 'they should completely keep aloof from political activities with a view to ensuring impartiality on the path of administration', things have refused to improve in the Government offices and the civil secretariat. It is not unknown that many employees are now more interested than before in Kashmir politics. Services seem to have been politicalised following the release of Sheikh Abdullah...

7. "When the Cabinet was expanded in July by including Kushak Bakula, Sardar Harbans Singh Azad, Mohammed Ayub Khan and Ghulam Rasool Kar as Ministers of State, things in the Cabinet acquired a new complexion. Kar's voice became more effective in the Council of Ministers than other three Ministers of

State. Bakula and Azad were not given a free hand to use their powers as Ministers of State. According to Azad, his subordinates did everything under the guidance and orders of D.P. Dhar... And the Kushak was kept idle in his room with no work and no files for him...

8. "This time when Kushak Bakula is no longer a supporter of G. M. Sadiq, a line, if not a barrier, seems to have developed between the Ladakh leader and the Kashmir Premier. Bakula says that he has been hurt by the manner in which he was let down by Sadiq and Dhar. These two leaders had, earlier, assured him that he would be given the rank of a Cabinet Minister. But the Kushak was not elevated. He said that, after the death of Pandit Nehru, things in our State had deteriorated. When Panditji was alive these people, as well as Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, could not dare practice deceit on him...

9. "Kushak Bakula also said : 'As a Minister of State, I did not have any work to do and nor did anybody send any papers to my office. I sat idle in my chair and I did not know what these people were doing in various sectors, particularly Ladakh. There are many problems in Ladakh, which deserve immediate attention. From time to time I brought some important developments to the notice of the Premier and D.P. Dhar. But they have done nothing. I told Sadiq some time ago that some elements had been trying to foment communal trouble between Buddhists and Muslims in Leh and Kargil. It is very unfortunate that no action has been taken against these elements. It is equally unfortunate that Sadiq and his colleagues have turned a deaf ear and refused to take notice of the needs of people in Ladakh. I have come to this conclusion that Ladakh should be placed under the Central Administration, leaving no room for the State Government to create problems and difficulties for us... I intend meeting Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri

> in near future to stress the need for bringing the Ladakh region under the administrative control of New Delhi......"

Before the year 1964 ran out Kushak Bakula met Lal Bahadur Shastri in Delhi. The Kushak made a plea for New Delhi to acquire a firmer foothold in Ladakh and take greater interest in its administration and politics. The Kushak who submitted a note to the Indian Prime Minister on certain aspects of the Ladakh situation and requirements of the people of the region, explained to him that it was Sadiq Government's failure to meet its responsibilities to the people of Ladakh that had added to discontent against the State Government. Following is the text of some portions of the Kushak's note :

1. "The Jammu and Kashmir Government seems indifferent to the people of Ladakh. The local administrative machinery in the region of Ladakh is far from a model... I have found some Kashmiri officers biased ; the general complaint from the Ladakhis, especially the Buddhist community, is that Ladakh lacks the rule of law. The Government of India looks helpless to do anything about it, when we are, very legitimately, looking up to New Delhi for redress.

2. "We have opposed the former Premier, Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, for the failure of his Government to meet its responsibilities to the people of Ladakh.... We do not hesitate to raise our voice against the present Government headed by Ghulam Mohammed Sadiq.... We are not for any agitational course against the Sadiq Government. But we cannot afford to ignore the deteriorating economic situation in our region ; we shall keep on crying for greater attention to the problems of the border district of Ladakh.... We criticise the Sadiq Government for its failure to meet legitimate demands of our people in Ladakh. . . The Kashmir Premier must disabuse himself of any notion that I have any special grudge against him....

3. "We make a plea for the Government of India to acquire a firmer foothold in Ladakh and to take greater interest in its administration and politics. Politically, the State has so far been the virtual preserve of a few individuals. The Centre may venture into it sometimes but only briefly and by the courtesy of these individuals. The Centre can, if it has the will, alter this position and make its presence felt in the State. . . . Its political responsibilities apart, the Centre has a moral responsibility in Ladakh which it has inadequately fulfilled.... And as I feel that the Centre must see that Ladakh has a reasonably clean and efficient administration and that corruption does not shape political life in the region, I find the growing need for the Government of India to acquire a firmer foothold in the border district....

4. "The time has come for a thorough look into the internal administration and political life of Jammu and Kashmir and an earnest and courageous attempt to clean up the place and to take energetic and honest measures to remove popular discontent and redress grievances.... It is time that New Delhi realised that its policy of applying the Nelson's blind eye to the unpleasant things in Kashmir is short-sighted and suicidal..."

Earlier, following the arrest of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed in September, posters appeared in Leh and Kargil towns in support of the former Premier. G. M. Sadiq and some of his colleagues in the Government and ruling National Conference had accused a section of the Ladakhis, led by Kushak Bakula, of creating unnecessary doubts by the circulation of posters in some parts of Leh and Kargil. Although the Kushak had pleaded innocence and made it plain that he had no knowledge of the origin and author of posters, he did not welcome Bakshi's arrest. The wheel had come full circle in Kashmir ; Bakshi was in, the Sheikh was out. New Delhi confessed that it was taken by surprise. In his statement in the Rajya Sabha, Lal Bahadur Shastri said the Centre had not advised the State Government

to arrest Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed. "We were not informed of the arrest either", he added. Bakshi and four other members of the Kashmir Legislative Assembly were arrested in Srinagar on 22 September under the Defence of India Rules. Soon after Bakshi and others were taken into custody, the Sadr-i-Riyasat, Dr. Karan Singh, prorogued both Houses of the State Legislature. The autumn session of the Assembly had begun a day earlier—on 21 September.

Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed had called on the Sadr-i-Riyasat on 21 September, showed the list of signatures of 35 members of the Legislative Assembly and disclosed his plan to move a vote of no-confidence against the Sadiq Government. Bakshi was advised by Dr. Karan Singh not to move the no-confidence motion in view of the activities of Sheikh Abdullah and his Plebiscite Front Party. Bakshi did not see eye to eye with the Sadr-i-Riyasat's arguments ; in fact, Bakshi explained to Dr. Karan Singh that it was not easy for the former to "shut the mouths" of 35 members of Legislative Assembly. Bakshi told the Sadr-i-Riyasat that members of his (Bakshi's) group had conveyed to Shankar Prasad, Secretary, Kashmir Affairs, their resentment against Sadiq and his associates. Shankar Prasad was in Srinagar when members of the Bakshi group expressed their anger against the Sadiq Government. Later, Sadiq, Qasim, G. L. Dogra, Trilochan Dutta and D. P. called on the Sadr-i-Riyasat to discuss with him the problem that had arisen from Bakshi's threat to topple the Government. At 10 P.M. on 21 September, G. L. Dogra was sent to meet Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed ; Dogra made an attempt to impress upon him not to excite his legislators. Dogra pleaded for his co-operation and opposed his plan to move a vote of no-confidence against the Sadiq Government. Bakshi looked obdurate and determined; Dogra failed to woo Bakshi. Dogra rushed to Karan Singh's palace and apprised Sadiq and others of Bakshi's plan. Sadiq and D. P. had hurried consultations with Delhi on phone; line of action was prepared following a meeting in the palace where Kashmir's Divisional Commissioner, S. Banerji, was also present. At 11.30 P.M. some senior police officers, including Surendra Nath, Deputy Inspector-General of Police (CID), were summoned to the palace to receive instructions. Knowledgeable

sources were surprised, if not shocked, by Lal Bahadur's statement in the Rajya Sabha that while New Delhi had not advised the State Government to arrest Bakshi, "we were not informed of the arrest either". Some senior officials of the Indian Home Ministry knew well the line of action formulated in Karan Singh's palace. Lal Bahadur Shastri and Shankar Prasad, too, knew what was to happen on 22 September.

G. M. Sadiq gave reasons for the arrests. He told a Press conference that some cases of corruption and criminal cases in which Bakshi's "complicity" was suspected were being investigated. It was only to prevent him and his associates from creating conditions likely to affect adversely public peace and tranquility that they were detained under the Defence of India Rules, he said. Sadiq added : "Later when cases against Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed are complete he will have to face them". Some circles in Kashmir valley and Jammu opposed the "drastic step" of arresting Bakshi. Sadiq and his associates did take notice of this development. They felt disturbed ; the circulation of pro-Bakshi posters in some parts of Leh and Kargil provided an instrument to Sadiq to embarrass Kushak Bakula in spite of the latter's statement that he had no knowledge of the origin and author of posters. There was no fear for Sadiq on account of exploitation by Pakistan of Bakshi's arrest. The Sadiq camp was in line with some friends in New Delhi when they argued that Bakshi had met a fate no different from that of K. H. Khurshid, who at the time of Sheikh Abdullah's visit to Pakistan, was President of "Azad Kashmir". Also, circulation of pro-Bakshi posters in Leh and Kargil towns did not cause any fear. But as Sadiq wanted an excuse to run down the Kushak in the ruling party, he was not prepared to believe the Kushak's ignorance of the development.

In March 1965, Kushak Bakula disclosed an important story in Jammu about the Chinese build-up across the Ladakh border. The story, obtained by him from some Tibetan refugees who had earlier crossed into Ladakh from western Tibet, stated, among other things that Chinese had added nearly five divisions to their strengh on the border from November 1962 to the end of 1964. The Kushak conveyed the story to New Delhi also with

the plea that "we should not think that our troops have done all that they should have or sit back with any measure of complacency". The Kushak said : "How effective or otherwise our defences on the border are, depends not on what we do but also on what the Chinese do on the other side of the mountains". That was the time when warlike preparations, started by Pakistan soon after Chou En-lai, Prime Minister of China, endorsed Pakistan's viewpoint in regard to the Kashmir question during his visit to Pakistan in early 1964, suggested overtly that President Ayub Khan was for some sort of trouble on the borders. Both the character of China's sympathy with Pakistan and the pattern of Indo-Pakistan relations indicated preoccupation of Ayub Khan and Foreign Minister, Z. A. Bhutto, with accelerating the build-up of the strictly military power of Pakistan at the cost of other objectives.

Skardu, district headquarters of Pakistan-held Baltistan territory, began to hum with activity as a result of the hectic movement of Pakistani defence men and material soon after 2 June 1965, when an English daily of Pakistan, Dawn, quoted President Ayub as having said : "We shall go full out, and smaller though we are than India, we shall hurt India beyond repair." This was followed by a threat held out by another English daily, Pakistan Times, on 11 July that in the event of war with India, Pakistan troops "would march up to Delhi, would occupy the Red Fort and hoist the Pakistan flag on it". India had known that the Pakistani army officers had been training thousands of people from Skardu across Ladakh to Sialkot across Suchetgarh in Jammu region in sabotage, terrorism and other subversive activities. But Indian Military Intelligence knew little about the movement and activity of Pakistani infiltrators and saboteurs close to the border in the Kargil sector. That several armed Pakistani infiltrators could successfully avoid detection by Indian Military Intelligence not only when crossing the border but also throughout their trek to Dras towards the end of July, testified to the resourcefulness of the intruders. These infiltrators were rounded up as the hostilities broke out between India and Pakistan.

The district of Baltistan is known for the enormous mountain-chains or masses of mountains. Skardu was linked with

Kashmir valley and Ladakh before the occupation of the territory by Pakistan in August 1948. Four roads were used from Kashmir to reach Skardu. First was by the Zojila through Dras down the Indus to Skardu, whereas the second route was by Suru and Kargil and thence to Kiritchu and Skardu. The third was by the head of the Tilail valley joining the Zojila route at Dras and the fourth road was by the Stakpila over the Deosai plains. Communications between Ladakh and Skardu were provided by four routes. They were by the Shayok, by the Chorbatla and Khapalu, by the Indus, and by the Fotula, Kargil and Loti. In Kargil sector—in fact in the Muslim Kashmir valley—Pakistani infiltrators had taken for granted the fullest co-operation of the local Muslims. This did not take place, at any rate on the expected huge scale.

By end of August it became clear in the region of Ladakh and elsewhere in Jammu and Kashmir valley that India could not afford to allow another wave of well-equipped Pakistani infiltrators to enter the State. In the situation Pakistan could not expect that its trigger-happy soldiers on the border could go on unleashing heavy artillery fire without any reply or reprisals from India. The dominant mood in the Buddhist homeland and in Hi ndu-majority Jammu region was that Pakistan must be disabused, once and for all, of its delusion that it could use force against India with impunity By the time Indian Parliament began its monsoon session in New Delhi the Pakistani posts in Kargil from which the vital Srinagar-Leh road was being imperilled by the Pakistanis had been recaptured by the Indian troops. It was Radio Pakistan that gave the world first information about the Indian action in Kargil. In Delhi it was realized that military action against the Pakistani invaders and the diplomatic action to keep the world informed of the Pakistani attack were two sides of the same coin. Efforts to keep India's friendly countries posted with the developments were, therefore, stepped up. A development that encouraged the Government of India was what was described as "objective attitude" of the American and British Press to Pakistan's attempt to disrupt the State administration by the despatch of armed infiltrators across the cease-fire line. When in 1947 Pakistan mounted a similar offensive, nothing dismayed India more than the stubborn refusal of the

American and British Governments to accept the bristling evidence of aggressive violence before their eyes and to condemn the aggressor. The years appeared to have brought more insight and understanding.

While the war between Indian and Pakistani armed forces was going on, Foreign Minister of China, Chen Yi, stretched a brief stop in Karachi into a six-hour conference with Z.A. Bhutto on 4 September. The Chinese Minister gave oblique support but no concrete assurance to Pakistan in a statement backing "just action taken by Pakistan to repel the Indian armed provocation". On 5 September, Pakistani Commander-in-Chief, General Musa, sent a message to his troops: "You have got your teeth into him. Bite deeper and deeper until he is destroyed". General Musa's message failed to fill iron into his soldiers' bodies in the wake of advances made by the Indian army and air force in different sectors. Pakistani army's massive attack in the Chhamb sector with the support of Patton tanks and Pakistan air force brought about material change in the situation. Aggression could not be allowed to have its way and consequently the defence forces of India had to take recourse to counter measures for the purpose of attacking bases in West Pakistan.

While China alerted her troops in western Tibet, close to the Ladakh border, in the beginning of September, Indian air space near Chushul was violated by the Chinese aircraft three times between 10 and 15 September. As the Indian troops on this side of the Indo-Tibetan border had instructions to maintain a close vigil without provoking a clash, no bullet was fired when the Indian air space was violated by the enemy aircraft. On 22 September, President Ayub made a broadcast in which he announced the acceptance, with conditions, of the U. N. Security Council's resolution calling on Pakistan and India to stop fighting. Even as he was talking of the cease-fire, three F-86 Sabre jets and B-57 bombers of the Pakistan air force headed for Amritsar and dropped some 1,000-pound bombs on Chharhata, the busy industrial suburb of the city of the Golden Temple. Hostilities between India and Pakistan which began with an invasion by infiltrators, came to an end on 23 September.

On 24 November 1965, India's Defence Minister, Y. B. Chavan, cautioned the country against being provoked by Chinese intrusions. He gave details of the three incidents on the Sikkim border between November 19 and 21, and the "latest" intrusion in Ladakh, in reply to a calling-attention motion in the Lok Sabha. From Sikkim the Chinese withdrew within a few hours, he said. About Ladakh, he did not have full information, though there were reports of "some trucks having gone back". Chavan was not sure about the Chinese intentions—perhaps they wanted to provoke India, perhaps they were probing the Indian defences.

Lal Bahadur Shastri went to Tashkent with the good wishes of all people in his country, except those few on the lunatic fringe who found in interminable dispute and strife the only rationale for their being. Indians, by and large, recognized that prosperity and progress could have no durable basis except in conditions of peace ; they looked forward to a relaxation of tension, if not a resolution of every dispute, between India and Pakistan. The fighting had revealed the magnitude of the dangers inherent in the virtually total lack of understanding and trust between the two countries. It was awareness of this potential for incalculable danger which, among other considerations, prompted Moscow to take the first major initiative for a settlement between India and Pakistan. At that stage, Russia enjoyed greater trust and prestige in India than even in Khrushchev's time. What was significant was that the post-Khrushchev leadership had made the gain not by reinforcing the kind of unequivocal support that Khrushchev gave India over Kashmir; the new Soviet leadership had shown reluctance to come out openly on India's side in her dispute with Pakistan. Russia could not wish to see Pakistan draw even closer to China ; perhaps the Soviet leaders also felt that they could only harm the prospects of any Indo-Pakistan settlement by openly and continually harping on India's inviolable rights to Kashmir. At Tashkent, the Soviet Premier Kosygin had been at pains to indicate that his role was not more than that of a host, but that he was accompanied by Gromyko and Marshal Malmovsky could not be merely a formal gesture of respect to the guests. The composition of the Indian and Pakistani delegations also showed that

the importance of the meeting and the possibility of down-to-earth discussions had been fully appreciated both in New Delhi and Rawalpindi. A joint declaration signed by the two leaders (Shastri and Ayub) was issued after a series of meetings between the two sides. But the people of Pakistan got confused, suspicious and divided over the Tashkent declaration, with the majority profoundly unhappy about the outcome. To them the declaration represented a betrayal. Those who favoured the declaration and those who opposed it were in agreement, however, that it was a hopeful sign that Russia had apparently abandoned her former rigidly pro-India policy on Kashmir. The end of the Tashkent talks came during Ramazan, a holy period of fasting for Muslims. This and the shock of the sudden death of Lal Bahadur Shastri to a certain extent allayed criticism of the declaration.

Chapter 7

An element of confusion was introduced in the situation in November 1965 following the spread of an idea by an Indian commentator favouring a linguistic reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir. Briefly, the argument given by the commentator ran like this : The present set-up in Jammu and Kashmir inhibits healthy political initiatives in the Valley, particularly at the level of the newly-enriched urban middle class. This vital Kashmiri-speaking section, dominantly Muslim, sees itself forever at the mercy of complex communal equations with the Dogras of Jammu. Historically, the State of Jammu and Kashmir is an artificial creation of Dogra hegemony and the State has become an anachronism.

The commentator contended that "the independence urge of the Kashmiri-speaking people takes on a secessionist flavour because of the despair, widely felt, that the Kashmiri will be denied a State within the Indian Union in which he is master". He suggested that since the demand for a Punjabi Suba was under active consideration, the opportunity should be used for a larger linguistic reorganisation of State boundaries in the North and North-West. Specifically, the Kashmiri-speaking areas should be formed into a separate State, Jammu should

become a part of an enlarged Himachal Pradesh, and Ladakh should be brought under the direct control of New Delhi. Such a reorganisation, it was contended, would serve two useful purposes. It would blunt the agitation confined to the urban centres in the Kashmir valley. It would also help to strengthen the secular character of the Indian Union because it would give two minorities, the Sikhs in Punjabi Suba and the Muslims in Kashmir, a dominant position in the two new States.

A stir was caused in three regions—Ladakh, Kashmir valley and Jammu—and in New Delhi, too, following Governor Dr. Karan Singh's statement approving a reorganisation of the State on linguistic basis. The statement to the London Times, in November 1965, proposed that Jammu could be amalgamated with Himachal Pradesh, Ladakh taken over by New Delhi as Union Territory, enabling Kashmir valley to acquire an autonomous status. The Congress and Jana Sangh circles in the State reacted sharply and condemned Karan Singh's idea. G. M. Sadiq, Chief Minister, called it an imported idea. "If this move was allowed to succeed", he said, "it would amount to acceptance of two nation theory and would gravely weaken the secular foundation of the Indian Union". The Jana Sangh opposed the idea of dismemberment of the State on linguistic basis and favoured the formation of a bigger border State in northern India, comprising Jammu and Kashmir and Himachal Pradesh. Significantly, however, the Muslim population of Kashmir valley did not attack, openly, Karan Singh's formula ; several Muslim circles pointed out that the Muslims constituting a majority in the districts of Doda and Poonch in the Jammu province would not like and love to be bracketed with Dogra Hindus and would prefer to stay with the Muslims of the Valley.

Equally significant was the standpoint of a sizable section of Ladakh's population ; in the trans-Himalayan region, Karan Singh's formula found support from some circles, particularly Buddhist. Encouraged by the Governor's formula, Kushak Bakula went a step further by arguing that Karan Singh's prestige would get enhanced if he started bringing pressure to bear

upon the powers that be to bring Ladakh under the direct control of New Delhi "without further delay". The Kushak and his supporters in the border region did not know that New Delhi had made plain to Karan Singh that he had not enhanced his stature or prestige by unnecessarily introducing an element of confusion and controversy into a situation which had already become difficult. Nor did the Kushak know that some political circles, especially the Congress Party, in the Indian capital had been of the opinion that far from countering the secessionist tendencies, the formation of a Kashmiri-speaking State would almost certainly strengthen them immeasurably. These circles believed that the linguistic reorganisation of Jammu and Kashmir would be dangerous folly because it would amount to a communal partition of the State. For this reason the formation of linguistic States in other parts of India could not be carried to its logical conclusion in Jammu and Kashmir. It was also argued that the creation of a Kashmiri-speaking State would be interpreted both at home and abroad as India's acceptance of the two-nation theory.

Kushak Bakula only knew that since Karan Singh was Governor of Jammu and Kashmir State, his proposal favouring division of the State on linguistic basis could pave the way for the Ladakhis to renew their demand for bringing their homeland under the direct control of New Delhi. The Kushak, who considered himself as the guiding force of the Land of the Lamas complained that Ladakh was not being treated fairly. When Sadiq and some other politicians chided him for encouraging regional politics, his only defence was reported to be that the Buddhists wanted to survive. More often than not the Kushak gave a long catalogue of grievances of his homeland in different fields, administrative, economic and political. His charge was that in official policies, assistance to economic development and recruitments, Ladakh had been discriminated against.

It was not unknown to the Kushak that in February 1953 Dr. Shyama Prasad Mukherjee, the then President of Bhartiya Jana Sangh, had conveyed to Jawaharlal Nehru his idea favouring, among other things, autonomy for Ladakh, Jammu and

Kashmir valley. Earlier, in December 1952, Balraj Puri, a political leader of Jammu, suggested internal autonomy to the three regions of the State, namely, Jammu, Kashmir and Ladakh. The Kushak's grievance is that while in the absence of good administration since 1948 caused difficulties in various fields, the total centralisation of powers by the ruling party in Kashmir left little scope for local initiative and stabilised a regional sentiment in Ladakh. During the regime of Sheikh Abdullah (1947-1953) the Kushak failed to seek the recognition of Ladakh as an entity. In absence of an able leadership—and lack of a pronounced political awakening among the Buddhists and non-Buddhists—in Ladakh, Sheikh Abdullah's successor managed to devote most of his time to politics and problems of Kashmir. Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed treated Ladakh to be a cultural entity; he was not prepared to oblige the Kushak who wanted the recognition of his homeland as a separate political and constitutional entity. During the Sadiq regime there was widespread dissatisfaction and feeling among the Buddhists of Ladakh that they were discriminated against and neglected.

On March 10, 1966, G. M. Sadiq ruled out any division of Jammu and Kashmir on linguistic or any other basis. Replying to the three-day debate on the Governor's address in the Kashmir Legislative Assembly in Jammu, Sadiq denied that there was any secret clause in the Tashkent agreement according to which Jammu and Kashmir would be divided into different units. He said : "I can say with authority that there is no substance in these rumours. There is no such secret clause in the Tashkent agreement and there will be no division of Kashmir." Sadiq's statement opposing dismemberment of the State did not bring about any change in the Kushak's demand for separation of Ladakh from Kashmir. The Kushak went on with his plan to educate Ladakhis on the merits of bringing the region under the direct control of New Delhi. Despite the advice given to him by the Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Indira Gandhi, to avoid talking of Central Administration for Ladakh, Kushak Bakula refused to abandon his demand. Mrs. Gandhi who visited Kashmir in Septemper 1966, explained to the Kushak that economic growth of backward regions and pockets, including Ladakh,

could be ensured without politicalising certain issues. She assured that the Government of India was always prepared to assist the State Government in building economy of backward areas.

Following his entry into Lok Sabha as an elected member from Ladakh Parliamentary constituency, Kushak Bakula began to seek support from various groups and individuals in the Indian capital in the middle of 1967 for his demand. About a month later, the issue of Ladakhis' representation in the Kashmir Cabinet assumed undue importance. It appeared that Kushak Bakula, M.P., had not taken kindly to the manipulation by a section of the Kashmir ruling party—Congress—to try and bring Sonam Narboo into the State Cabinet. Being the first Ladakhi to receive his engineering degree from London in 1941, Narboo had worked in various capacities. In 1963, he worked for the Border Roads Organisation as a chief engineer. Early in 1965, he came back to the State as the Development Commissioner of Ladakh. Recipient of the Padma Shri in 1960 for having built the Leh-Kargil road, Narboo was elected to the State Legislative Council as a Congress candidate in the middle of 1967 after resigning his post a few months before his retirement was due. The other contender for ministerial office was Sonam Wangyal, who was elected to the State Legislative Assembly in the 1967 general elections from the Leh Assembly constituency as a Congress candidate. Wangyal enjoyed the support and blessings of Kushak Bakula. Wangyal frankly admitted that his success at the polls was primarily due to the Kushak's support. Before his election to the State Assembly, Wangyal was a member of the Kashmir Legislative Council.

Narboo and Wangyal differed radically in their attitude towards Kushak Bakula. To the former, Kushak Bakula was merely a Lama of the Yellow Hat sect, which at that stage formed only 15 per cent of the Ladakh population. To the latter, Kushak Bakula was Ladakh's top religious leader, towards whom the Ladakhis "do not turn their back". Narboo believed that Kushak Bakula inspired more awe than respect because of the office he held. Wangyal regarded him as the true Buddhist leader who had attained the highest degree in Buddhist studies

and metaphysics from the Drepung monastery in Tibet. Whatever the attitudes of Narboo and Wangyal towards Bakula, there was no doubt about his hold on a majority of the Ladakh population.

When Kushak Bakula was elected to the Lok Sabha in 1967, he began persuading the Chief Minister Sadiq to include Sonam Wangyal in his Cabinet. For one reason or the other, Sadiq kept the balance hanging. With the demand for representation of a Ladakhi member in the State's Council of Ministers, existence of the rival groups in the Congress Party in Ladakh became an open secret. One group was led by the Kushak himself and the other was loyal to Narboo. When the Indian Congress President, Nijalingappa, was in Srinagar in June 1968 in connection with the National Integration Council meeting, a 50-member Ladakhi deputation, supporting Kushak Bakula, submitted a memorandum asking him to liquidate rivalries and help pave the way for inclusion of a Ladakhi Buddhist in the Sadiq Ministry. Later, Kushak Bakula contacted Sadiq on more than one occassion in Srinagar and Jammu to stress the need of giving representation to a Ladakhi, particularly Wangyal, in the Kashmir Cabinet.

But following Sadiq's "go-slow-tactics", serious differences of opinion developed between the Chief Minister and the Kushak on the one hand and, on the other, the two factions in Ladakh Congress launched a campaign of allegations and counter allegations against each other. Sudden deterioration in the unity of the State Congress Organisation following the resignation by Mir Qasim from the Presidentship of Pradesh Congress Committee and from the membership of the Legislative Assembly in March 1969 compelled Sadiq to hold the stick in an appropriate manner. Kushak Bakula's demand was conceded; Sonam Wangyal was included in the Ministry as a Minister of State for Planning and Cooperation. This resulted in a controversy, though minor, in the region of Ladakh; the two factions in Ladakh Congress looked somewhat opposed to sink their differences. The controversy over Wangyal's inclusion in the Ministry had hardly died down when a small group of Buddhists

created tension in Leh. These Buddhists had started "dharna" to protest against some untoward incidents in Ladakh in May-June 1969. Police had to intervene to bring the situation under control only after some elements attempted to communalise the issue which cropped up in the wake of Bakula's strong opposition against "dharna". Nearly 500 Buddhists had participated in the "dharna" staged against "politically-motivated expressions and activities" of some leaders including Bakula.

Earlier, in April 1968, a memorandum submitted to the Gajendragadkar Commission by the Pleading Committee of Ladakh Congress attracted wide attention. The memorandum alleged that rights of the Ladakhis had been violated and their just demands overlooked by the authorities. Signed by Kushak Bakula and some senior Congressmen of Ladakh, the memorandum was divided into four parts. While in the first part a comparison was drawn between Ladakh and two other regions of the State, the second part dealt with the appeals and representations made from time to time by the people of Ladakh. The last two parts of the memorandum contained various suggestions for solving the problems of the border district "which has been totally denied favourable treatment". While contradicting the Government's "tall talk" about Ladakh's progress, the memorandum maintained that the standard of living in Ladakh "is very low". "Even today the Ladakhis eat 'sattu' (powdered grain), ride 'tattu' (mule) and wear 'pattu' (inferior tweed)".

While criticising the authorities for having paid meagre attention in the spheres of education, health services, communications, transport, irrigation and power development in the Ladakh region, the Pleading Committee said : "The administration is totally static in Ladakh and there is no Ladakhi employee in the Centre and State Secretariat." The memorandum demanded reservation of at least 15 seats for the Ladakhis in the Central Secretariat. Pakistani aggression in 1947 caused tremendous losses in Ladakh, but the Government of India, the memorandum said, did not grant material aid and assistance to the destitute. In spite of numerous representations and appeals from the border district, the Ladakhis "have failed to evoke sympathy of the authorities", it added.

The Pleading Committee pointed out that as a result of the hostile attitude of China and Pakistan and "illegal capture" of Sinkiang and Tibet by China, Kashmir's age-old trade with these regions had stopped and "unemployment is widespread". According to the memorandum, the demand for NEFA-type administration for Ladakh in 1967 was the direct consequence of the step-motherly treatment meted out to the Ladakhis. "However, in response to the advice tendered by the Central authorities, we have decided to shelve the demand, at least for the time being", it said.

The Gajendragadkar Commission was appointed by the Sadiq Government in November 1967 to make an assessment of the development programmes apportioned to the various regions of the State, and to recommend measures necessary to give assurance that available resources were being shared equally. At first, Chief Minister Sadiq had hoped to leave questions of communal nature outside the purview of the inquiry. He was obviously anxious to avoid excitement that might further tarnish the image of the State as an example of secularism. But on further consideration, the State Government felt that it would be more useful to make the enquiry as complete as possible. The Gajendragadkar Commission was also asked to examine the official policies regarding employment and admissions to institutions of higher education. The appointment of the Commission, which followed the Hindu agitation in Kashmir in August-September 1967, was welcomed by all sections of the people, except, curiously, the Kashmiri Pandits who had apparently sough it most. Their position was understandable inasmuch as, constituting hardly two per cent of the population, they were already manning 27 per cent of the State's higher services. It was no wonder that even Kashmiri Muslims had hailed the appointment of the Commission as they felt that they trailed behind even the Pandits. Many of the latter wondered later whether the agitation that they organised (in August over the marriage of a Pandit girl with a Muslim youth) had not done them more harm than good.

In December, the report, covering 204 pages, the Gajendragadkar Commission was made available. Ladakhis' reaction to

the findings of the Commission was favourable. Ladakhis, by and large, felt that their woes had found due expression in the Commission's report. For example, the Commission had recommended that there should be a full-fledged Cabinet Minister belonging to Ladakh. It suggested opening of two colleges, one at Leh and another at Kargil. Secondly, the status of Ladakh should be accorded due recognition. The Government should consider the request of Ladakhis for giving Ladakh its due place in the formal name of the State, the report said. The Commission had also recommended various other measures for development of roads and communications, increasing arrangements for providing electricity and irrigation facilities and ensuring increased supply of foodgrains in Ladakh.

Kashmir valley did not offer a favourable reception to the report of the Gajendragadkar Commission. The Valley had looked at Commission with curious, hopeful eyes. But what the Kashmiris, especially Kashmiri Pandits, had hoped for, they could not seek. The Kashmiris, by and large, had expected the Commission to strongly recommend many more favours for them. The Commission had also made a few recommendations for Kashmir's development. But the manner in which it had discussed grievances of and suggested remedies for the underdeveloped Ladakh and Jammu had astonished, if not agitated, many Kashmiris.

In spite of the cold reception to the report of the Commission from politically important Valley of Kashmir, a group of Ladakhis headed by Kushak Bakula insisted on early implementation of the recommendations. The Kushak started enlisting support of some members of Indian Parliament and important functionaries of the Government of India for building pressure on the State Government on the need for a speedy implementation of the Commission's recommendations and recognising Ladakh as a separate political and constitutional entity. In July 1969, Kushak Bakula met Mrs. Indira Gandhi, Prime Minister, in Delhi to request her to consider his demand for NEFA-type administration in Ladakh in view of G. M. Sadiq's "dilatory tactics" on the question of implementation of the

Gajendragadkar Commission's recommendations. As Mrs. Gandhi advised Kushak to accord priority to the task of making the Ladakh Congress party a bridge between the people and the Government, the Buddhist monk referred to the local authorities' apathy towards him and said that the Congress leadership was responsible for the formation of the two rival groups in the ruling party in his homeland. Mrs. Gandhi, who paid a visit to Kashmir towards the end of August that year, was reported to have made a passing reference, during her meetings with the Chief Minister Sadiq, to the Kushak's anxiety for implementation of the recommendations of the Gajendragadkar Commission. Sadiq made it plain that the Government would implement "all reasonable, viable and, above all, those recommendations of the Gajendragadkar Commission which ensure the maintenance of integrity of the State".

In October, a group of Ladakhi Buddhists met Y.B. Chavan, India's Home Minister, in Srinagar and submitted a memorandum urging the powers that be to adopt speedy measures to place Ladakh on the road to progress. Chavan who was in the State's summer capital in connection with the eleventh meeting of the Northern Zonal Council, which was inaugurated by him on 4 October, learnt from these Buddhists that if the local Government continued to ignore Ladakh's "deteriorating political and economic situation", majority of the Ladakhis would not hesitate to launch an "agitation". In November, a number of posters appeared in some parts of Ladakh. While emphasizing the importance of bringing the trans-Himalayan region under the direct control of the Government of India, the posters threatened that if the "legitimate demand of underdeveloped Ladakh" in favour of Central Administration was not conceded sooner than later, people of the region would be forced to adopt extreme steps. The threat could not be translated into action as in January 1970 some posters, suggesting the creation of an "independent" Kargil as the solution of the much-talked-of Ladakh problem, were found in Leh. This development set the Bakula camp thinking anew. For some weeks there was much speculation about the origin of the poster. While some saw the hand of anti-Bakula elements behind it, others read a deeper

meaning in it and wanted a thorough inquiry into the whole affair. As the Ladakhis began to hibernate in the winter season, little was left for them to make use of in generating heat in the sub-zero temperature.

Kushak Bakula had pleaded, before the year 1970 ran out, that Buddhists of the State should be classified as backward. But his plea carried little logic; the Backward Classes Committee did not entertain it in its report. The Backward Classes Committee was set up by the State Government in February 1969 in response to some of the recommendations of the Jammu and Kashmir Commission of Inquiry which was headed by Dr. P. B. Gajendragadkar. The Committee functioned under the chairmanship of Mr. J. N. Wazir, a former Chief Justice of Jammu and Kashmir High Court. Members of the Committee undertook an extensive journey to the "length and breath" of Jammu and Kashmir before the preparation of the report. The Committee had received 213 memoranda from a number of individuals and organisations in the State. While the number of memoranda from Jammu region was 71, the number of those submitted from the Kashmir valley was 139 and from the district of Ladakh only 3. At least 18 leaders from Ladakh appeared before the Committee. The State Government generally approved the lists of social castes and occupational classes recommended by the Committee to be treated as backward. The Committee held that there were some "notorious backward areas" which had to be treated differently from the rest of the State. These, according to the report, had been backward because of inaccessibility and absence of communications, deficient production on account of rocky and sandy soil, and inadequate irrigation facilities. Taking all the relevant factors into consideration, the Committee came to the conclusion that the people of 10 sectors of the State should be treated as backward. The Committee did not entertain suggestions that all Sikhs, Shias, Christians, Buddhists and Muslims of the State should be classified as backward. Reason given by the Committee was that the provisions of the Constitution of India as applicable to this State guaranteed equality before law and equality of opportunity in matters relating to employment or appointment to any office under the State.

Mrs. Indira Gandhi arrived in Srinagar on 14 July 1970 on a three day visit to Kashmir. It was much against the wishes of the Ladakh Congressmen led by Kushak Bakula that she described the Chief Minister Sadiq as "very strong" and said : "We do not want to weaken him in any way". And as she issued instructions to the Congress leadership to take effective steps to build unity of purpose and of action among all cadres of the ruling Congress, the Kushak and his followers were left with no choice except to wait and watch. On finding that Mrs. Gandhi and Sadiq were not prepared to permit Congressmen to kick up controversies and create further bitterness in the party, the Kushak did not talk of "step-motherly treatment" meted out to the Ladakhis. Some Buddhist leaders, loyal to Kushak Bakula, appealed to the Dalai Lama during his visit to the Nubra valley in Ladakh in October 1970 to help them in their search for the Central Administration for Ladakh. But the Dalai Lama advised them to go slow on the question of Central Administration and instead devote their time and energy to the important issue of raising monasteries and spreading Buddhism in the region. The Dalai Lama told a congregation of nearly 6,000 Buddhists in Nubra that while the need of the hour was to spread Buddha's message in the length and breadth of the country, the Ladakhis should unite to bring about a positive improvement in Ladakh Buddhist society.

As the situation changed with the growth of signs of a sharp confrontation between New Delhi and Islamabad after a Fokker Friendship plane of the Indian Airlines was hijacked to Lahore on 30 January 1971, Kushak Bakula was advised by P. N. Dhar Secretary to Mrs. Gandhi, to forget, for the time being, his demand for NEFA-type administration for Ladakh. The Kushak maintained silence. His main occupation before and during the 14-day war between India and Pakistan in 1971 was to pray to invoke god's mercy for Ladakh and its people.

Kushak Bakula and his followers could not afford to maintain silence after the Indo-Pak war came to an end; they started once again, referring to the grievances of Ladakhis and local Government's inability to study, in depth, various problems and provide a solution to satisfy the majority of the Ladakq

population. To the Kushak and his supporters, Mir Qasim who was installed as the Chief Minister following the death of Sadiq in, Chandigarh in December 1971, proved ineffective in understanding the grievances of Ladakhis. Signs of a serious rift between Qasim and Bakula came to the fore after black flag demonstrations were held against the former at a couple of places in Ladakh visited by him when he was the Chief Minister. Qasim held Bakula and his followers responsible for the demonstrations. Bakula held Qasim's supporters responsible for having launched a campaign of vilification against him (Bakula) and his "peace-loving" associates. The tale did not end there. Mir Qasim and some leaders of the Pradesh Congress Committee formed an adhoc committee of the rival faction leaders of the Ladakh Congress with the ostensible purpose of reducing Bakula's authority and influence. Three senior Lamas, opposed to Bakula, were encouraged and given official positions.

Kushak Bakula was unwilling to cooperate with Qasim although his (Bakula's) close associate, Sonam Wangyal, had been included in the Ministry as the Minister of State for Co-operatives. The Kushak said in March 1972 that he was not happy with Qasim for the way in which he gave a false account of the political situation of Ladakh to Mrs. Gandhi when she visited Kashmir towards the end of December 1971. Another development that disappointed the Kushak was Qasim's unwillingness to assign a better portfolio to Sonam Wangal. And when in June 1973 Lama Lobzang, secretary of the Ladakh Buddha Vihara, issued a statement demanding, among other things, a Union Territory status for Ladakh, Mir Qasim and his close associates saw the hand of Bakula behind it. Lama Lobzang, who painted a dismal picture of the frontier district, accused the Qasim Government of neglect and indifference towards the region. Acting on the instructions of Qasim, some Ladakhi Buddhist leaders took a strong exception to the manner employed by Lobzang to "mislead" the public opinion.

Not only that. In a joint statement issued in Srinagar, three representatives from Kargil—Kachoo Mohammed Ali, Deputy

Minister for Excise and Taxation, Munshi Habib Ullah and Akhon Mohammed Raza—ridiculed Lobzang's demand and said "there seems to be some ulterior, sectarian and parochial motive at the back of this move which appears to be the handiwork of some irresponsible elements bent upon vitiating the peaceful atmosphere in the State". Kachoo Mohammed Ali claimed that Ladakh had made "rapid strides in the path of progress in recent years". "It is not our claim that now nothing remains to be done. But what has been achieved so far is of no small consequence", he said and added : "I have facts and figures to show how much Ladakh has progressed in the socio-economic sphere during the past some years."

In September, Mrs. Gandhi visited Kashmir. Sonam Wangyal managed (with the help of a Congress leader of Jammu, Mangat Ram) to meet the Prime Minister in Srinagar. Wangyal thanked Mrs. Gandhi for her "continued love for and interest in Ladakh"; he had to do so because he lacked courage and ability to convey to her that Ladakh was in search of something more than the allocation of funds for its developmental schemes. On 22 June 1974, Mrs. Gandhi visited Kargil. On 23 June, she paid a visit to Leh. Before her visit to the frontier region, Kushak Bakula had threatened to launch a campaign for the grant of Union Territory status to Ladakh. Mrs. Gandhi's Secretary, P. N. Dhar, had to make an appeal, as he did on one occasion in the past, to the Kushak not to press his demand "in the given circumstances". Mrs. Gandhi did not find it necessary to refer to the internal situation during her address to the Ladakhi gatherings; she gave a call for greater cooperation from the people for increasing production in fields and factories in India. Bakula accompanied Mrs. Gandhi during her second visit to Leh on 30 October. Bakula derived an element of satisfaction from her assurance to a public meeting at Leh that the State and the Government of India together would do everything possible to ensure development of Ladakh. People of Ladakh, she said, should not be led away by wrong slogans; the people should extend their fullest co-operation "so that full fruits of development can be realised".

The year that was. In 1975, few talked of the demand for grant of Union Territory status to Ladakh. A political settlement, known as Kashmir Accord, was reached between Mrs. Gandhi and Sheikh Abdullah. Mir Qasim was dislodged. Sheikh Abdullah was installed as the State's Chief Minister on 25 February 1975. Qasim and his associates in the Congress Party were shocked by the development; they did not want to get elbowed out. But as Mrs. Gandhi wanted to minimise the influence of pro-plebiscite groups in Kashmir, she roped in the Sheikh and, happily for the Kashmir leader, transferred political power to him. Kushak Bakula knew that Sheikh "is intolerant of criticism". Naturally, therefore, he avoided to start a controversy over his demand or grievances before and during the emergency, promulgated in India in June 1975.

After the emergency was lifted, a big change occurred on the Indian political scene; Mrs. Gandhi was humbled by the Indian electorates. Fall of her Government paved the way for the formation of the non-Congress Government at Delhi with Morarji Desai as the Prime Minister.

Kushak Bakula and his associates have not changed their stand with the change of the Government in the 1977 general election in India. Sheikh Abdullah's National Conference and some Muslim leaders of Ladakh, including Munshi Habib Ullah, a member of the Abdullah Ministry, are aware of the Kushak's formula favouring dismemberment of Ladakh from the Kashmir valley. And since they are keen to maintain religious link between the Kashmiri Muslims and Ladakhi Muslims, they may not hesitate to take up arms in case the region of Ladakh is allowed to separate from the Valley. Ladakhi Muslims, by and large, are opposed to the move favouring a Union Territory status for Ladakh. The Kushak is aware of the fact that some Muslim circles in Ladakh support the Sheikh's formula for internal autonomy for the region. But the Kushak is determined; in fact, he has brought about a new change in the situation; it is the creation of a squad, consisting of a number of Ladakhi Lamas and Buddhists, for achieving a Union Territory status for Ladakh. The Kushak told me in Srinagar in October 1977 that members of

the squad would not hesitate to resort to fast and to Saigon-style suicide, if necessary, for the sake of Union Territory status for the region. "If a dissatisfied Ladakhi looks nostaligically towards Tibet for a while, the powers that we should not regard him as an agent of Peking. What led to the fall of Tibet is not unknown. But when we find that we are not being treated satisfactorily in political and administrative spheres, we find it difficult to stop some of the dissatisfied Ladakhis from deriving some sort of relief by talking of good old days and looking nostaligically towards Tibet for a while", he said.

Chapter

8

That high plateau—Tibet—beyond the Himalayas is the roof of the world. More than three-fourths of its area lies over 10,000 feet above the sea level. The great part of inhabited Tibet is situated between altitudes of 10,000 and 16,000 feet. For the most part inhospitably craggy, the forbidding terrain in the country is arid beyond belief. In the midst of serrated ranges of frozen hills and rarefied air even to walk a few yards uphill is an effort requiring reserves of strength and stamina.

Tibet has been divided into three parts. First part consists of a tangled mass of plains and valleys, lying at an elevation of 16,000 feet and above in the northern Tibet. The second territorial division is known as southern Tibet, containing the valleys of the Tsang-po and its tributaries. The Tsang-po is considered to be the highest navigable river in the world. Southern Tibet is usually called central Tibet. Reason : It contains the central province with Lhasa as the capital. The third territorial division, known as eastern Tibet, is the most fertile part of Tibet.

It has been recorded that Nya-Tri-Tsenpo became the first ruler of Tibet 418 years after the death of Lord Buddha. 40

generations of kings succeeded him. Bon religion was professed by the people during the reigns of first 27 kings in Tibet. Spread of Buddhism began, for the first time, in Tibet during the reign of the 28th king, Lha-Tho-Ri-Nyen-Tsen. A drive was launched during the reign of the 33rd king, Song-Tsen-Gampo, to establish Buddhism in the country. The present Tibetan alphabet was drafted by his minister, Thun-mi Sam Bhota, after he completed his study in India. Some Indian scholars and Tibetans, who understood Sanskrit, were engaged during the reign of the 37th king, Thi-Song-Deu-Tsen, to translate the teachings of Buddha into the Tibetan language. The number of monks in Tibet had registered a big increase during the reign of the 40th king, Nga-Dak-Tri-Ral. The three kings, the 33rd, 37th and 40th, have been regarded as the greatest in the history of Tibet for the role they played in establishing Buddhism in the country. The 41st king, Lang-Dar-Ma, who came to the throne in 901 A.D. was assassinated after an "evil rule" of six years. His death brought about disintegration in the kingdom; tiny kingdoms existed for over 300 years.

In the 13th century, Chogyal-Phag-Pa, who was the chief monk of the Sakya monastery, became the ruller of Tibet after his visit to China. Tibet was ruled, until 1435 A.D., by a succession of 31 Lamas—20 belonging to the Sakya monastery and 11 of Phamo Drupa lineage. Rinpong kings ruled from 1435 to 1565, and three Tsangpa kings from 1566 to 1641. A Dalai Lama received temporal power over Tibet in 1642 A.D. First person, who assumed temporal powers, was the fifth Dalai Lama. Personal relationship between the Dalai Lama and Emperors of China was maintained for quite a long time.

After the British Expedition to Lhasa in 1904, attempts were made to gain Chinese adhesion to the treaty with which it had concluded. But the Expedition had alarmed the Chinese Government, who were determined to work for the establishment of Chinese power in Tibet. In April 1906, a Convention was concluded between Great Britain and China at Peking. This modified the Lhasa Convention by providing that the preservation of Tibet's integrity should rest with China. The

Chinese Government was not slow; it began to take advantage of the changed situation. In the autumn of 1906, Chang Yin Tang arrived in Lhasa as High Commissioner for Tibet. Tang began to formulate schemes to reduce the British influence in Tibet. In this he was aided by the Peking Convention and inconsistency and unwillingness of the British Government of the day to assert itself in Tibet. Text of the Convention :

Convention between Great Britain and China, 1906.
Signed at Peking on the 27th April 1906.
Ratified at London on the 23rd July 1906.

Whereas His Majesty the King of Great Britain and Ireland and of the British Dominions beyond the seas, Emperor of India, and His Majesty the Emperor of China are sincerely desirous to maintain and perpetuate the relationship of friendship and good understanding which now exist between their respective Empires;

And whereas the refusal of Tibet to recognize the validity of or to carry into full effect the provisions of the Anglo-Chinese Convention of 17th March 1890, and Regulations of 5th December 1893, placed the British Government under the necessity of taking steps to secure their rights and interests under the said Convention and Regulations;

And whereas a Convention of ten articles was signed at Lhasa on 7th September, 1904, on behalf of Great Britain and Tibet, and was ratified by the Viceroy and Governor-General of India on behalf of Great Britain on 11th November, 1904, a declaration on behalf of Great Britain modifying its terms under certain conditions being appended thereto;

His Britainnic Majesty and His Majesty of China have resolved to conclude a Convention on this subject and have for this purpose named Plenipotentiaries, that is to say :

HIS MAJESTY THE KING OF GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND :

Sir Ernest Mason Satow, Knight Grand Cross of the Most Distinguished Order of St. Michael and St. George, His said

Majesty's Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary to His Majesty the Emperor of China;

AND HIS MAJESTY THE EMPEROR OF CHINA :

His Excellency Tong Shao-yi, His said Majesty's High Commissioner Plenipotentiary and a Vice-President of the Board of Foreign Affairs.

Who having communicated to each other their respective full powers and finding them to be in good and due form have agreed upon and concluded the following Convention in six articles :

ARTICLE I

The Convention concluded on 7th September, 1904, by Great Britain and Tibet, the texts of which in English and Chinese are attached to the present Convention as an annexe, is hereby confirmed, subject to the modification stated in the declaration appended thereto, and both of the High Contracting Parties engaged to take at all times such steps as may be necessary to secure the due fulfilment of the terms specified therein.

ARTICLE II

The Government of Great Britain engages not to annex Tibetan territory or to interfere in the administration of Tibet. The Government of China also undertakes not to permit any other foreign state to interfere with the territory or internal administration of Tibet.

ARTICLE III

The concessions which are mentioned in Article 9 (d) of the Convention concluded on 7th September, 1904, by Great Britain and Tibet are denied to any state or to subject of any state other than China, but it has been arranged with China

that all the trade marts specified in Article 2 of the aforementioned Convention Great Britain shall be entitled to lay down telegraph lines connecting with India.

ARTICLE IV

The provisions of the Anglo-Chinese Convention of 1890 and Regulations of 1893 shall, subject to the terms of this present Convention and annexe thereto, remain in full force.

ARTICLE V

The English and Chinese texts of the present Convention have been carefully compared and found to correspond, but in the event of there being any difference of meaning between them the English text shall be authoritative.

ARTICLE VI

This Convention shall be ratified by the Sovereigns of both countries and ratifications shall be exchanged at London within three months after the date of signature by the Plenipotentiaries of both Powers.

In token whereof the respective Plenipotentiaries have signed and sealed this Convention, four copies in English and four in Chinese.

Done at Peking this twenty-seventh day of April, one thousand nine hundred and six, being the fourth day of the fourth month of the thirty-second year of the reign of Kuang-hsu.

Less than four years after the Convention of 1906 China invaded Tibet. With the arrival of Chinese army in Lhasa in 1910 the Dalai Lama fled to India. In 1911, revolution broke out in China. Chinese revolution created difficulties for the Chinese troops in Tibet and enabled the Tibetans to drive out the Chinese from the greater part of Tibet by 1912. But several Chinese managed to remain in eastern Tibet. By 1920 Chinese were able to build their influence in eastern Tibet.

North-eastern part of Tibet was under the Chinese control before the present Dalai Lama (staying in India since 1959) was born in the Taktser village in 1935.

After he fled Lhasa in March 1959 and came to India, the fourteenth Dalai Lama argued that neither China nor any other state had any power in Tibet from 1912 until the Chinese invasion in 1950. According to him, Tibet became completely independent in 1912. He stated : "We made no treaty with China, and consequently our de facto independence was not given a legal international form. In 1913, the British tried to settle the matter by inviting Chinese and Tibetan representatives to a conference at Simla in India. The three representatives met on equal terms, and after a very long discussion they initialled a draft convention. In this, the British persuaded the Tibetans to agree to their concept of Chinese suzerainty, and persuaded the Chinese to agree to the autonomy of Tibet. Britain and China were to respect the territorial integrity of Tibet, not to send troops into Tibet, and not to interfere with the administration of the Tibetan Government. But although the Chinese representative had initialled this agreement, the Chinese Government refused to sign it ; and so Tibet and Britain signed alone, with a separate declaration that China was debarred from any privileges under the agreement so long as she refused to sign it. She never signed it, and so never claimed suzerainty in this legal form. So matters remained. The Chinese Government went on insisting, whatever the question arose, that Tibet was part of China ; but meanwhile, there were no Chinese with any authority whatever in Tibet, and for 38 years Tibet pursued her own independent way."

A Chinese delegation came to Lhasa in 1934, after the death of the 13th Dalai Lama, to present religious offerings. The delegation remained in Lhasa on the ground that it wanted to hold fresh talks on the Sino-Tibetan border problem. Before his death, the 13th Dalai Lama took several measures to build Tibetan army and police; he had one regiment trained by Russians, one by Japanese and one by British. As the British system was found quite suitable, the Tibetan army was organised on British lines. The Chinese delegation (at Lhasa) looked

interested in watching the movements of Tibetan army personnel; the Chinese returned to their homeland after finding the Tibetan Government's unwillingness to allow them to stay in the country for a long time. Their departure from Lhasa did not affect the mobility and influence of a number of Chinese in some parts of eastern Tibet.

I have already given some details (in Chapter 3 and Chapter 4) of the rise of Chinese army's influence in Tibet before its fall as a result of the Chinese invasion. Preparations for the invasion were made after small batches of Chinese entered Tibet in 1948 to assess, among other things, the strength of the Tibetan army and defence installations. That time the strength of the Tibetan army did not exceed 9,000 men and officers. They had rifles. Number of machine-guns was put at 200 as against about 50 pieces of artillery of various kinds and 250 mortars. In 1949-50, Chinese troops entrenched themselves in eastern parts of Tibet; they did not hesitate to make show of their machine-guns in the town of Chamdo before they caused havoc in the area. After the fall of Sinkiang, a statement was issued in Peking in 1951, when a delegation of Tibetan representatives from Lhasa had gone to China for negotiations. The statement said that the Chinese Government had ordered the People's Liberation Army (PLA) to march into Tibet to eliminate the influence of aggressive "imperialist" forces in Tibet, to free the people of Tibet, and to enable them to return to the "big family" of the People's Republic of China.

This was followed by a big development which led over 5,000 personnel of the Chinese army to march into Lhasa by 1952-53. Chinese took possession of a huge area in Lhasa for a military camp and requisitioned houses. This they did after a firm foothold was established by the Communist troops in eastern Tibet. In 1954-55, Chinese started to enforce collective farming and compel the peasants in eastern Tibet to accept their schemes. In 1956, people of Lhasa were placed on the debris of doubts when they found a big increase in the number of Chinese in and around the capital of Tibet. By the middle of October that year the Chinese had engaged themselves in

building a network of strategic roads to facilitate the operations and flow of the Communist troops into Tibet. The situation became worse when, during the Dalai Lama's visit to India in 1956, the Chinese used atrocious methods to enforce their doctrines in the eastern Tibet. Proclamations were made on posters and in newspapers, saying that Buddha was a "reactionary". Copies of these posters were also circulated among Tibetans and Chinese officials in Lhasa and thrown inside the Potala and Norbulingka palaces.

Potala palace, built on the top of a hill in the city of Lhasa, was greatly enlarged by the fifth Dalai Lama in the 7th century. The central part of the building contained the great halls for ceremonial occasions, 35 chapels, four cells for meditation, and the mausoleums of seven Dalai Lamas, some thirty feet high and covered in solid gold and precious stones. Norbulingka palace was built in a large and beautiful walled garden. Chinese military camp was set up near this palace in 1952-53 in spite of the slogans raised by Tibetans against the Communist troops.

The Chinese started military action against the Tibetan agitation in some parts of Tibet in 1958; even the people of Lhasa were threatened with grave consequences in case they opposed the Chinese. As many Tibetans took to arms, the Chinese used machine-guns and mortars as part of their plan to annex the whole of Tibet. Lhasa fell by the end of March 1959. The Tibetan Government was dissolved. Norbulingka and Potala palaces, as well as a large number of houses and cottages in Lhasa, were damaged by the shelling; Chinese entered the two palaces and took possession of the golden mausoleums of the dead Dalai Lamas. The thirteenth Dalai Lama' Thupten Gyatso, had done so much for the peace and welfare of Tibet that the people decided to build a golden mausoleum as a token of their homage and respect. This tomb was erected inside the Potala palace.

Tibet was known for a greater number of monasteries and temples where anybody could pray and make offerings. Every

Tibetan enjoyed paying visits to places where the "Three Jewels", Buddha, Dharma and Sangha, were kept. Well-to-do families always had a temple in their homes. Even the poor had a little altar and an image of Buddha in their cottages, where butter lamps were always kept alight.

In Tibet, rainfall is small and the climate is dry and cold. Barley is the chief crop in the Tibetan uplands. Next to it come peas, wheat, and mustard. Favourable root-crops are turnips and radishes. Potatoes are cultivated mainly in central Tibet. Wheat is grown at the lower altitudes. Agriculture does well in eastern Tibet. The country is not well suited for the cultivation of green vegetables. A Tibetan has no great liking for them. But the Chinese, being accustomed to vegetables in their own country, grow them as far as possible. During the last one decade, the Chinese have set out several vegetable gardens in central Tibet. Apricots, walnuts, pears and peaches are freely grown in the lower parts of the country more especially in eastern Tibet.

The staple food of the Tibetans has been wheat flour and tsampa, which is a kind of barley meal, and meat and butter. Their drinks are buttered tea and chang. Until the British Expedition to Lhasa in 1904 the import of Indian tea into Tibet was prohibited by the Chinese. Although it was allowed from 1904, the Tibetans did not jump at the Indian tea. They liked the Chinese tea, which was found more nutritious, more pleasant to the taste, and more wholesome. After tea the chief imports from China were silks, satins, brocades, cotton goods, match boxes and buttons. There have been different opinions among the Buddhists of Tibet about eating meat. As the climate is rigorous in most of Tibet, consumption of meat is quite high; the custom has lingered in the country that "it is impossible to stay healthy in Tibet without eating meat".

Except for the monks and certain laymen who shave their heads, the Tibetans generally wear their hair either long, or else in a plait wound round their skulls. They often wear a conical felt hat. Their costume is not elaborate. The men wear fur caps and high leather boots, and the kind of a cloak

which is seen in different varieties all over Tibet. Cloaks are generally made of wool. The nomads, on the other hand, generally wear a sheep-skin cloak. The town-dwelling Tibetans supplement this garment with cotton or woollen drawers and a cotton or silk under-shirt with long sleeves. The women wear much the same clothes as the men. A cloak worn by a woman is fastened at the throat to show off her figure. She also wears bright blouses of cotton or silk. The men and the women are equally keen on jewellery such as silver gew-gaws, ear-rings, necklaces, rings, and amulets, embossed with complicated pictorial designs which are often inspired by animals.

They never wanted the Chinese to capture the roof of the world. But in the gruelling battle between the Buddhists and Communist troops, it was established that for the former conquest remained a vision as remote as a planet. The Chinese added a new chapter to the history by September 1959, when the roof of the world fell to become a province of the People's Republic of China.

Peopled by a different race with no ethnological kinship with any other in Asia, Tibet preserved its identity until the shadow of Mao Tse-tung came advancing from Peking. People of Tibet are quite different from the Chinese, with whom they have hardly anything in common. In appearance they are not in the least like the Chinese ; Tibetans have deeply tanned complexions, almond eyes, salient cheek-bones and noses which are prominent and often acquiline.

They have a tale to tell. Those who were dislodged from their moorings as a result of Peking's piracy, cannot ignore the events of the past. Men and women, all devout followers of Buddhism, came to be known as Tibetan refugees after they fled their homeland, beyond the Himalayas, in the wake of Chinese invasion. Although they are away from their homeland and, as a matter of fact, far from the Chinese occupation forces, they talk, occasionally, of the Chinese aggression, of Tibetans' revolt, of bloodshed, of Tibet's glorious past and rich cultural heritage, of palaces of the Dalai Lama, of elevated tablelands and valleys and pastures, of warlike

Khampas and Amdos, of rough and tough Lòlos and Ngologs, of Chinese traders, all uniformly clad in dark blue, of the shrill, strident fluting of the sing-song Chinese girls, of the small, willowy, Chinese women in their characterless, ill-cut uniforms of blue, of caravan-men or nomads, of monasteries and temples, of schools for monks, and of meditation centres for Tibetan nuns.

Out of thousands of nuns in Tibet, about 200 escaped into India by end of 1959. Most of them have found a new home for themselves at Dalhousie, where a meditation-cum-training centre has been set up to keep Tibetan nuns engaged. These nuns get lessons in Dharma and modern languages and also practise meditation and the traditional arts. Another centre for Tibetan monks has sprung up in Dharamsala. Being of the opinion that on the proper cure of these Lamas and nuns will depend the preservation of the monastic traditions of Tibetan Buddhists, the Dalai Lama has been taking a good deal of interest in ensuring that his followers are taught systematically, without violating the basic principle of the Tibetan system of education. This, he feels, is important for him as long as he is in India.

On the other hand, the drastic change brought about in the traditional system of education in Tibet during the last one decade or so has, by no means, been unimportant for the Chinese themselves. They have done away with the old Tibetan system, which sought to broaden and cultivate the mind of Tibetans by a wide variety of knowledge. The Chinese who started their operations with the slogan proclaiming 'ring in the new and ring out the old' have discarded old carriculum for the advanced standard of secular education, which included drama, dance and music, astrology and composition. A Tibetan is not permitted to get lessons in Sanskrit, metaphysics and the philosophy of religion.

While the institution of Buddhistic study has ceased to play the dominant role of religion and ritual in the lives of Tibetans, the number of the monks is said to have been reduced considerably. Those who have survived have under-

gone a radical change: they have been either deprived of the authority they wielded, earlier, in and outside their monasteries or assigned the task of propagating the basic principle of the Chinese system of education, which explained that religion was only a means of exploiting the people. Panchen Lama, who was the chief monk of the monastery of Tashi Lhumpo at the time of Chinese invasion, has adjusted himself in the altered circumstances in his country; he is reported to have been forced to marry a Tibetan woman and to surrender his position of being a religious leader. In 1953, the present Dalai Lama found Panchen Lama under the influence of Chinese teachings. The former discovered this during his meeting with the latter at Lhasa that year. In 1954, on his way to Peking, the Dalai Lama came across Panchen Lama at Sian, from where the latter accompanied Tibet's spiritual leader to China. Long before the death of Mao Tse-tung, 82-year old father of Communist China and inspiration of revolutionaries across the world, on 9 September 1976, Communist literature found its way almost everywhere in Tibet. Even the five monastic colleges of the two large monasteries of Drepung and Sera were flooded with the Chinese literature.

In June 1967, a representative of the Dalai Lama visited Srinagar following the receipt of a report at Dharamsala that a batch of Tibetan refugees had crossed into Ladakh. He told a couple of newsmen that about 20,000 Khampas and Amdos had engaged themselves in guerilla warfare against Chinese in northern Tibet. Tibetan guerillas were armed with automatic rifles, grenades and mortars, which, he believed, had been supplied to them by Formosa. He said several lakh Chinese had been settled in Tibet. While Tibetan girls were forced to marry Chinese males, Tibetan males were not allowed to marry Chinese girls. But if any Chinese wanted to carry his Tibetan wife with him to the Chinese mainland, he was not allowed to do so. He also said that with the intensification of Red Guard persecution of Tibetans, the number of suicides by Tibetans had increased. Large quantities of gold, extracted from three Tibetan gold mines including one in western Tibet, had been transported to China, he added.

Tibet, you have been told by some in the past, has underground deposits. Mineral wealth—gold, silver, copper, coal, iron, lead and sulphur—is reported to be present in different parts of Tibet. Aware of this wealth, the Chinese started what was said to be "scientific exploration" of these deposits in 1963. This was done in spite of an old-established objection (in Tibet) to mining on religious grounds. "If minerals be taken out of the ground", says the ordinary Tibetan, "the fertility of the soil will be weakened". Religion-ridden Tibetans believe that minerals were put into the ground by the "Precious Teacher", Padma Sambhava, when he brought Buddhist teaching from India, and that, if they are removed, rain will cease, and the crops will be ruined. Existence of gold deposits has been reported from some parts of Tibet, especially in places in the uplands of the northern plains, in numerous river beds, and on the face of a mountain in the Tak-po province, east of Lhasa.

Salt is found in several parts of Tibet on the banks of rivers and lakes. The bulk of the salt is drawn from the lakes in northern Tibet. Deposits of sulphur and occurrences of copper and iron have mostly been located in western Tibet, whereas central Tibet has been found containing silver reserves.

Different kinds of herbs with medicinal qualities are collected in various parts of Tibet, and are in great demand in China. Chinese doctors have been reported manufacturing a medicine from the horns of a species of deer in Tibet, which is believed to impart vigour to the body. Musk is a secretion in a small deer, which is found in many parts of the country, especially in Po and Kong-po. It commands high price and is exported in large quantities to China.

In July and August 1967, eight Tibetan families fled western Tibet and cross into Changthong area of Ladakh. Their chief spokesman, Yallu Stabdun, said : "Torture, indoctrination and starvation have tied down the people of Tibet. The Chinese often thunder as if several ploughs are dragged right across the body and soul of Tibetans". In March 1968,

Kushak Bakula met the Dalai Lama at Dharamsala. The two leaders discussed, among other things, the question of "liberation" of Tibet and rehabilitation of Tibetan refugees in India. Later, the Kushak told me that while the Dalai Lama was "highly worried" over the manner in which China had deeply entrenched itself in Tibet, India had committed "a great policy blunder by allowing China free hand in Tibet". "In September, some political circles, particularly Buddhist, got stirred up by the description in a book on international law that Tibet itself never expressed its desire to be independent of China. Buddhist leaders as weli as some individuals loyal to Jana Sangh expressed their surprise over the manner in which the University in Kashmir had recommended the book to post-graduate students of Political Science. Among other things, the book said : "Historical evidence proves that China for centuries considered Tibet as merely a part of her domain. Britain and Tzarist Russia in 1907 signed a Convention and singled out Tibet as a special area with which they agreed not to enter into negotiations except through the intermediary of Chinese Government. But the powers regarded China as having suzerain rights over Tibet. China made strenuous efforts to reassert her full sovereignty in Tibet, but British influence was firmly established in Tibet after the downfall of Tzarist Russia in 1917. Yet China's legal capacity over Tibet was in no way affected." The book added : "After the Chinese revolution of 1911 the Chinese President issued a proclamation declaring Tibet as an integral part of the Republic. The Tibetans never expressed willingness to assume international obligations as a State. It (Tibet) had never any international status and was always legally a part of Chinese territory."

In March 1969—about a decade after the fall of Lhasa—Jayaprakash Narayan and twelve members of Indian Parliament issued a statement in New Delhi, in which they appealed to the Government of India to take diplomatic initiative for Tibetan independence and correct its "grievous blunder" of recognizing Chinese suzerainty over Tibet. That time both Kushak Bakula and the Dalai Lama supported the statement, which also warned Peking that "even if the Chinese leave

nothing but ashes in our sacred land, Tibet will rise from these ashes as a free country even if it takes a long time to do so". Interest of some sections of the Indian population, and more so of the Ladakhis, in the importance of Tibet was not without any meaning ; they knew that the Kashmir State consisted of the most diverse inhabitants as its neighbours. In the north across the mountains stood Soviet Russia and Sinkiang; in the east was Tibet, in the west stood Afghanistan. Kashmir's proximity to Russia, now China, made the question of Kashmir's security important.

A sketchy report of China's greedy eye on the mountainous region of Ladakh was made available in Srinagar in December 1969 by a Japanese traveller, Kanda Nuwana. "China looks enger to reap where it has not sown; in fact, China wants to dominate whole of Asia so as to pose a threat to Russia on the one hand and, on the other, create moments of anxiety for the USA", he said. Born in Japan and married to a Chinese girl, Nuwana revealed that, before and after his marriage in 1964, he happened to visit China twice. He said that while no principles of "morality" and no regard for world opinion "can stand in the way of the achievement of their objectives", Chinese leaders believed that expansion of their country "is the only thing which must be kept in view regardless of any other consideration". He was of the opinion that the prolonged struggle for power after which the Communists captured power in China "has made them tough and given them great faith in force".

The Japanese traveller stated that it was not unknown that, following the explosion of China's first nuclear bomb in Sinkiang in 1964, Chinese nuclear establishments and other defence industries had come into play in Sinkiang. The Chinese Government had taken sufficient measures to detect and check any form of espionage in Sinkiang and Tibet and in and around Shanghai, Shatung Nanking and Canton. Circulation of several million copies of the Red Book in and outside China, he said, had apparently run against the propriety and philosophy of the Constitution of Communist China, which came into force in 1954.

Among other things it is stated in the Preamble of the Constitution of China that the object of the foreign policy of China "is to work for world peace and the progress of humanity". The people of India and Tibet have not been unfamiliar with the actual working of these professions. Article 3 of the Constitution inter alia lays down that "all the nationalities are equal; discrimination against or oppression of any nationality and acts which undermine the unity of the nationalities are prohibited". This Article was flouted during the course of Red Guard persecution of some sections of the population in Sinkiang and Tibet. The armed forces of China, under Article 20 of the Constitution, belong to the people. "Their duty is to safeguard the gains of the people's revolution and of national construction, and to defend the sovereignty, territorial integrity and security of the country." Was it under this Article that hundreds of people got killed in China in the Cultural Revolution following groupism in the organs of the State there? Articles 85 to 103 of the Chinese Constitution deal with the fundamental rights and duties of citizens of China. Among other things, these Articles provide that "citizens have freedom of speech, freedom of the Press, freedom of assembly, freedom of association, freedom of procession, and freedom of demonstration". Are these Articles honoured by Peking's big wigs? An answer to this question is not far to seek. It is not unknown that in China restrictions continue on freedom of speech and freedom of Press.

In October 1970, the Dalai Lama conveyed to Kushak Bakula that he wanted to launch a campaign in different parts of India to collect signatures from the people as part of his plan to bring pressure to bear upon New Delhi to take diplomatic initiative for Tibetan independence. That was not done; the Dalai Lama wanted to keep the issue alive either by expressing anger, occasionally, over the manner in which China had tightened its grip over Tibet or by referring to the needs of the Tibetan refugees. With the passage of time, the Dalai Lama's resentment against Chinese showed signs of abatement. Although this aspect was discussed by me in my book—THE FALL OF GILGIT—which was released in

August 1977, I have found it necessary to repeat here that some of those who happened to know certain gains made on the economic front in Tibet under the administrative and political control of the Chinese, came to contact the Dalai Lama at a time when Mrs. Gandhi's Government was not prepared to pick up cudgels with Peking on the question of independence for Tibet. The 14th spiritual and temporal ruler of Tibet did not deem it necessary to press his demand after he was informed between 1973 and 1975 that the Tibetans' resistance against the Chinese occupation forces had petered out and that warlike Khampas and Amdos had been fully controlled in Tibet by the Red Army's strong retaliatory measures against them.

The Dalai Lama visited Darjeeling hill areas in May 1975. During his speeches at various functions he neither lost his temper nor spoke with vengeance against the Peking regime for the holocaust in Tibet. He gave a clear indication that the will of the Tibetan people would reign supreme. In other words, if refugees desired to return to Tibet, he would not come in the way. And when the Dalai Lama arrived in Srinagar on 24 August 1976, he refused to say a word against China. During the course of an informal chat with me, he did not refer to Tibet's independence. He said that if over one lakh Tibetan refugees living in exile in India, Nepal and Bhutan desired to return to their homeland (Tibet), he would not come in the way. "Some say that Peking has raised its military formations in Tibet after 1959. But at the same time some others have reported that many changes have been brought about in economic sphere, social system and political order in Tibet", he added. He did not conceal his desire to return to Tibet along with thousands of Tibetan refugees when he said : "I want to go back to see things myself in my homeland. I want to die in my own country. But I do not know how they (India and China) would react if and when I start to press for my return to the 'holy land' (Tibet)."

Days, weeks, and months rolled by. The Dalai Lama did not refer, openly, to his line of thinking or of action. Nor did he reiterate his desire to return to Tibet. But what attracted

the attention of an Indian intelligence agency in September 1977 was a report from Dharamsala that the 14th spiritual and temporal ruler of Tibet has been invited by the Chinese to visit his homeland. A month later, in the middle of October, Sonam Wangyal, a former Minister of State from Ladakh and chief lieutenant of Kushak Bakula, told me in Srinagar that he had also learnt of the invitation having been extended to the Dalai Lama to pay a visit to Tibet to "examine, in depth, the improved situation and the constructive role being played by the Chinese in building the region".

Chapter

9

Long before his death, Mao Tse-tung had kept in mind the decisive lesson of his career as a revolutionary leader that the pursuit of power was a mixture of politics and war, in which the strictly military aspects of the problem could not be underestimated or delegated simply to technicians. He came to power with a mature army in being; he expanded this establishment after he came into power in 1949.

The Chinese Red Army, decimated in 1934-35, numbered about nine lakhs in 1945. Between 1947 and 1949 the Communists moved gradually into a military offensive. Its main purpose were: to isolate the government garrisons in Manchuria by severing rail connections, and to prepare the way for a later repetition of the Manchurian strategy by infiltrating the country-side of central China. The situation moved on to a climax in the course of 1948. Wei-hsien and Tsinan and Shantung, Chinchow and Mukden in Manchuria, fell to the Communists with enormous losses in men, equipment and supplies. Manchuria and east central China were lost by the autumn of 1948. The balance of force drastically shifted between September and November 1948. By 1949 government troops numbered fifteen lakhs; Communist strength, built

mainly on Kuomintang (KMT) surrenders, had risen to over sixteen lakhs.

Following the annoucement of the decision to abolish area governments in June 1954, the Chinese Communists maintained a merging of civil and military authority at various levels in the hierarchy. The key military leaders remained those with whom Mao built up bonds of personal loyalty and intimacy. The character of China's economic programme and the pattern of Sino-Soviet relations indicated Mao's involvement in the task of accelerating the build-up of the strictly military power of China, at the cost of other objectives. There was every reason to believe that Mao regarded military power and his control over it as the key to both the internal and external position of China.

China began her calculated attempt to gain a foothold in the strategically-situated small state of Hunza across the frontier region of Ladakh in 1951, when a Chinese delegation toured the area with a view to influencing the behaviour of the people. Pro-Peking sentiment came to be noticed among the inhabitants of Hunza and Nagar, a neighbouring state, for the first time in 1952 when Chinese goods, including silks, green tea, cloth, transistors and cameras, were sold in the region at throw-away prices. Following two important developments—Khrushchev's presentation in condiered words of a "fact" during 1955-56 that Russia's interest in Asia was no less than China's and the resentment by the Pakistani press and politicians against the Soviet leaders' statements in support of India in Kashmir towards the end of 1955—China found it easy to develop friendly relations with Pakistan. Unrestricted movement of the Chinese inside the valleys of Hunza and Gilgit began to be ensured after Pakistani Prime Minister, Feroz Khan Noon, told the Pakistan National Assembly on 8 March 1958 that there would be no alternative for the people of Kashmir except to walk into Communist camp, if America and Europe failed to solve the problem. He also revealed that Pakistan had sent a delegation to the Chinese Premier and tried to persuade the Russians to adopt a different attitude on Kashmir. And after the first serious development in the Sino-Soviet conflict occurred in 1958,

China adopted a new line: to flatter the people and Government of Pakistan, to emphasize Peking's earnest desire to assist Pakistan in building her economic strength, to infiltrate into student community and peasant and labour unions in some parts of Pakistan, Gilgit, Nagar and Hunza, and to encourage some circles to spread reports of massive land forces and armament industry in China.

As the development of friendly relations between Pakistan and China had taken place in the backdrop of Soviet support to India on the Kashmir question, the Chinese Government began to assure the Government of Pakistan (soon after the Bandung Conference) that there was no conceivable clash of interests between the two countries which could imperil their friendly relations. One of the significant sidelights of the Indo-Pakistan relations after Nehru's visit to the United States in 1960 was that Pakistan challenged India's right to settle the boundaries between Ladakh and China. In Jaunary 1961, Pakistan sounded China informally regarding border settlement. But a diplomatic note asking Peking for the demarcation of the boundary was sent on 28 March 1961. The Chinese Government took long to reply to the Pakistani offer as Peking was awfully busy building her troops close to the borders of India. China responded to the Pakistani proposal in February 1962 and on 3 May 1962 the two Governments issued a joint statement in which they agreed to conduct negotiations "to locate and align their common border".

Relations between India and China took a turn for the worse after the Governments of Pakistan and China issued the joint communique. In May and June 1962, V.K. Krishna Menon, India's Defence Minister, challenged Pakistan's right to settle Kashmir's boundaries with China. He told the Security Council on 22 June 1962 : "Over and above all this then has occurred the situation in which Pakistan today—not for any good reasons, but merely for nuisance value and as an instrument to put pressure on us—has entered into negotiations and, I believe, has concluded agreements with the Central Government of the People's Republic of China. That agreement is in

total violation of any rights of authority Pakistan may possess, for Pakistan has no sovereignty over this State ; it is not Pakistan's to trade away or to negotiate about." Krishna Menon's statement followed the protest notes sent by the Government of India to China and Pakistan on 10 May 1962.

India's protest note to China stated : "In lodging an emphatic protest with the Government of the People's Republic of China for this interference with the sovereignty of India over the State of Jammu and Kashmir, the Government of India solemnly warns the Government of China that any change, provisional or otherwise, in the status of State of Jammu and Kashmir brought about by third parties which seek to submit certain parts of Indian territory to foreign jurisdiction will not be binding on the Government of India and that the Government of India firmly repudiate any agreements, provisional or otherwise, regarding her own territories arrived at between third parties who have no legal or constitution locus standi of any kind. It is clear that the Government of China are in this matter acting in furtherance of their aggressive designs and are seeking to exploit the troubled situation in Kashmir and India's differences with Pakistan for their own advantage. The Government of India will hold the Government of China responsible for the consequences of their action."

On 31 May 1962, China sent her reply. The Chinese reply rejected India's protest and said : "The Chinese Government has already refrained from making any remarks on the historical background of the Kashmir question. Nevertheless, the Kashmir question is after all a dispute between two legal Governments, those of India and of Pakistan. China has diplomatic relations with India and also with Pakistan, and India, too, has diplomatic relations with Pakistan. The Chinese Government only hopes that this dispute between India and Pakistan will be settled by them peacefully, and has always been against anyone taking advantage of it to sow discord in the relations between the two countries. So far as China is concerned, nothing would be better than a peaceful settlement of this dispute by India and Pakistan through negotiations. However, more than ten years have passed and despite the best wishes

and expectations all along cherished by China, this dispute between India and Pakistan remains unsettled. In these circumstances, anyone with common sense can understand that the Chinese Government cannot leave unsettled indefinitely its boundary of several hundred kilometres with the areas the defence of which is under the control of Pakistan merely because there is a dispute between India and Pakistan over Kashmir. It is entirely necessary, proper, legitimate, and in accordance with international practice for the Chinese Government to agree with the Government of Pakistan to negotiate a provisional agreement concerning this boundary pending a final settlement of the Kashmir question."

Pakistan, too, rejected India's protest and said in her reply of 9 August 1962 : "It is strange that the Government of India should first obstruct and frustrate the attempts of the United Nations and of Pakistan, over the past fourteen years, to settle by peaceful procedures the status of the territory of the State of Jammu and Kashmir and then proceed to question the right of Pakistan to enter into negotiations with China to reach an understanding on the alignment of that portion of the territory for the defence of which Pakistan is responsible."

While correspondence was in progress between China and India for a negotiated settlement, the Chinese regime resorted to arms to enforce its territorial claims, culminating in a massive attack on India on 20 October 1962. China occupied a further area of 2,500 square miles in Ladakh, in addition to the 12,000 square miles occupied earlier through aggressive intrusions. In the eastern sector (NEFA), the Chinese forces had advanced into another 20,000 square miles of Indian territory. Subsequently, the Chinese forces withdrew in NEFA under China's unilateral cease-fire declaration of November 21, 1962, up to the Mcmahon Line. While fighting was going on between Indian and Chinese troops, Indian Military Intelligence department sent a message to New Delhi about the presence of a group of Chinese officials in Pakistan. The message also gave some details of the movement of Pakistani troops close to the borders of Kashmir and Kargil. The development led the the Ministry of Defence to send instructions to the Indian troops in Jammu and Kashmir to be on the alert.

An announcement was made in Rawalpindi on 26 December 1962 that China and Pakistan had agreed in principle on the alignment of the border between Sinkiang and the occupied parts of Kashmir. Pakistani rulers had fully realised that it was beyond their control to eject groups of Chinese troops from the area close to the Hunza border. The Chinese, too, had known Pakistan's inability to displease China after her refusal to withdraw from the area and subsequent statement by the Chinese Government on 31 May 1962 in support of Pakistan on the Kashmir dispute. On 2 March 1963, the agreement was signed in Peking by Foreign Minister, Z.A. Bhutto, on behalf of the Government of Pakistan and Foreign Minister Chen Yi on behalf of the Government of China. Pakistan claimed that she had gained an area of 750 square miles out of the agreement. But on 4 March 1963, the Indian Government got a report that Pakistan had ceded to Chinese about 2,700 square miles of the territory of occupied Kashmir.

While China added about five divisions to their strength across the Ladakh border between November 1962 and the end of 1964, the pickets dug and the posts established at numerous places close to the Indo-Tibetan border after the Indo-Pak war of 1965 were part of a "single coordinated defence structure". In the beginning of August 1966, Indian official sources said that Pakistan had doubled its armed forces along the cease-fire line in Kashmir. These sources said that while Pakistan had achieved this build-up both in regular forces and also in "Azad Kashmir" forces, there had been some strengthening of Pakistani forces in the Lahore, Wagah and Sialkot sectors. The Indian Government kept the USA and Soviet Union informed of the build-up. Pakistan, the sources added, had moved one division of troops into Skardu in north-central Kashmir, and built airstrips in the sector. This, they explained, posed a threat to India's vital military highway to Leh, in Ladakh, high in the Himalayan frontier facing Chinese troops in Tibet.

India's defence oaganisation looked, once again, smooth and well-oiled since 1966. On 27 September 1970, India's Defence Minister, Jagjivan Ram, asked security officers in Kashmir not to take chances on the defence preparedness in the context of

"hectic war preparations by Pakistan". In Srinagar, he discussed certain aspects of the defence preparedness with Lt. Gen. K.P. Candeth, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Western Command, and some army commanders. He also visited some forward areas in Ladakh to make a study of the Indian troops' state of preparedness. Tension on the border mounted following serious skirmishes between Pakistani and Indian troops at some places in Uri and Tithwal in Kashmir and Poonch and Mendhar in Jammu province during the first two weeks of November. After the violation of cease-fire line by Pakistani troops in Kargil, Naushera, Chhamb and Akhnoor, Indian troops deeply entrenched themselves in these areas by the end of November.

Outbreak of hostilities between India and Pakistan immediately after an attempt was made by a few jet fighters of Pakistani air force to destroy the Srinagar airport on 3 December 1971 brought about a complete change : creation of Bangladesh after it was separated from West Pakistan with the help of the Indian troops, especially Border Security Force, fall of Chhamb in the Jammu province in spite of India's ground and air superiority, ouster of President Yahya Khan of Pakistan, building of additional bridges between China and Pakistan for transportation of more military hardware to Rawalpindi, promotion of relations between India and Russia, and emergence of a new pattern of differences between Moscow and Peking. End of the 14-day war between India and Pakistan was followed by the dramatic announcement of the Simla agreement on 2 July 1972, which created hopes for bringing about normalisation of relations between the two countries. And as Indian leaders began to stress the need for promoting friendly relations with all the neighbouring countries, India, Pakistan and China were found extremely interested in building the strength of the armed forces in their countries.

"In a lonely, sensitive place like Kashmir, people seem to be more ready to see agents", said Bruce Maxwell Thomas of New York city as he came out of the central jail in Srinagar on 23 December 1972. Thomas was arrested in Leh, tried there and sentenced to fifteen days in prison and a fine of Rs. 200.

His guilt was that he had entered Ladakh without the requisite Government permission. That time Ladakh was a prohibited area, and all including the locals had to secure Government permission to enter the territory. Thomas shrugged his shoulders as his attention was drawn to reports flashed in the newspapers in Srinagar saying that a CIA agent, on a "mysterious" mission to Ladakh, had been apprehended. "In a sensitive place like Kashmir, people seem to be ready to see agents", he remarked. The American was perhaps right. The newspaper in Srinagar, barring an exception or two, not infrequently published stories linking foreigners, especially those from the United States, with CIA activities in Kashmir. The hippies who came to Kashmir each year in hundreds were a special target, and the campaign had assumed larger proportions after the Prime Minister, Mrs. Gandhi, and the Congress President, Dr. Shankar Dayal Sharma, publicly charged the American Intelligence with "undesirable" activities in India.

How did Thomas get to Leh ? Thomas had an answer. "I am a freelance photographer now in contract with the Educational Direction Inc., West Port, Connecticut, who make film strips for schools. They have sent me to tour various countries to get photographs of the places of history, archaeology, architecture, sports, agriculture and the like. This assignment brought me to Leh as well. As far as Ladakh is concerned, I never knew it was a prohibited area. I never saw a signboard warning travellers against entering Ladakh without a special Government permission. Indeed, I was never stopped anywhere after I entered the territory. There were a few Indian security checkpoints where I was asked to show my travel documents which I did when I produced my passport. Apparently satisfied, the security staff permitted me to get along. Indeed, one of them wanted me to give a lift in my car to Leh, and I did oblige him." But in Leh Thomas was spotted by a Kashmir Government intelligence man who got him arrested. In Srinagar, Thomas gave an impression that he was not satisfied over the authorities' failure to provide signposts warning travellers against entering the prohibited area of Ladakh without a special permission either from the Indian Defence Ministry or from the Government in Kashmir.

Indian Prime Minister, Mrs. Gandhi, flew into Kargil on 22 June 1974. She was accompanied by Lt. Gen. P.S. Bhagat, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Northern Command, and Chief Minister of Kashmir, Mir Qasim. She told a congregation of Indian troops in Kargil that although India was in favour of cordial relations with all the countries, including "our neighbours", India would resist attempts aimed at threatening her territorial integrity. She referred to India's policy of peace and said it did not stem from any weakness "on our part". "We will not allow any aggression on us from any quarter", she declared. India's armed forces, she said, were better equipped to meet any contingency and would improve further. Mrs. Gandhi also visited some forward areas in Leh sector and addressed troops there. Her visit to Ladakh was considered significant in the context of the involvement of China and Pakistan in building up "menacing" military strength across the border.

Lieutenant General N.C. Rawlley, Vice Chief of the Army Staff, visited some forward areas in Ladakh in September 9, 1974. General Rawlley's visit to Ladakh followed a hurricane tour of air force units in Kashmir and Ladakh by Air Chief Marshal, O.P. Mehra, Chief of the Air Staff. Before his return to Delhi, General Rawlley met senior officers of the Indian army during his visit to the defence units in Kargil and Leh sectors. General Rawlley's visit to the frontier region followed a detailed discussion between him and some army commanders in Kashmir on certain aspects of the defence problem and vigilance by the Indian security forces in the State. On 30 October, Mrs. Gandhi paid a visit to Ladakh. She addressed troops and held talks with the army commanders on the border situation in the region. She was accompanied, among others, by Lt. Gen. H.C. Rai, General Officer Commanding-in-Chief, Northern Command.

The border situation in Ladakh and in other parts of India remained, by and large, peaceful in 1975 before and after the proclamation of emergency to facilitate Indira Gandhi to remain in power. During this period, different quarters beyond the borders of Ladakh were reported interested either in watching

or studying the pattern of Sino-Soviet relations. The ideological differences between Russian and Chinese Communism seemed to be minor; they shared the Leninist concept of a Communist dictatorship as the "decisive instrument" for bringing about ultimate power to Communism. They shared an interest in the expansion of Asian Communism. On the other hand, there was no departure from the Chinese thesis that the scale of military, the number and quality of its leaders, and its historical position as the "first effective arm" of Chinese Communism would make it a factors to reckon with in the aftermath of Mao's death in relation both to Chinese domestic policy and in the future of Sino-Soviet relations. Governments of India and Pakistan remained engaged in the task of strengthening their defence apparatus. After the Chinese scientists exploded a nuclear device near Lop Nor, not far from the Takla Makan desert in south Sinkiang, on 27 October 1975, China circulated maps showing Ladakh as a part of Chinese Tibet. Several thousand copies of the map found their way into Tibet. Earlier, in the middle of September, two mountain dogs of the Chinese army were flown from Ladakh to Delhi for what was officially described as "a detailed study" by the Indian experts. These dogs, nabbed by the Indian security forces near one of their posts in the Daulat Beg Oldi area of Ladakh, were left behind by a patrol party of the Chinese troops during the course of "routine night patrolling" at a place close to the border.

Om Mehta, Indian Minister of State for Home Affairs, told newsmen in Srinagar on 27 June 1976 that steps had been taken to introduce air service between Kashmir valley and Ladakh within less than a month. On 6 July, it was stated that the Indian Airlines planned to buy two aircraft from a British firm for its route to some high-altitude regions in India, including Ladakh. Indian Airlines' preference for the British aircraft followed the successful trial-flight of an aircraft manufactured in the UK from Srinagar to Leh and from Leh to Jammu on 4 July. But the Government of India did not find this matter of much significance following the hijacking of an Indian plane from Delhi to Lahore on 10 September 1976. The hijacking of a Boeing-737 aircraft of the Indian Airlines was the second such incident in the history of Indian civil aviation. Both the times, the hijackers took the

Indian plane to Lahore airport. A Fokker Friendship plane of the Indian Airlines was hijacked to Lahore on 30 January 1971, when it was on a scheduled flight from Srinagar to Jammu. The Plane was blown up on 2 February by its two hijackers—Mohammed Asharaf, who was in the uniform of a sub-inspector of the Border Security Force, and Mohammed Hashim Qureshi. That time the hijackers were identified. But identity of the hijackers of the Indian plane from Delhi to Lahore on 10 September was not made public for the reasons best known to the authorities, especially the Jammu and Kashmir Criminal Investigation Department (CID). Neither the authorities in Kashmir nor the Government at Delhi doubted veracity of the report that six Kashmiris—Hamid Diwani, Mohammed Rafiq, Hassan Rathar, Abdul Rashid, G.N. Yattoo and Rasool Hajam—had hijacked the Boeing-737 plane to Lahore. Hamid Diwani, who belonged to Bondipore, was said to be the leader of the gang. While Mohammed Rafiq, Hassan Rathar and Abdul Rashid belonged to the Shopian area, G.N. Yattoo and Rasool Hajam were from Qazigund and Pulwama respectively.

Chapter

10

The controversy over the spread of nuclear technology began to get increasingly befogged for August 1976, when much was made of Dr. Kissinger's admission of a "high probability" that the heavy water supplied to India by the USA some 20 years ago helped in the manufacture of plutonium for the 1974 explosion in the Rajasthan desert. The heavy water, it was explained by Indian scientists, was needed as moderator for the Canada-India research reactor at Trombay; plutonium was generated in the course of "normal" reactor generation.

The France-Pakistan pact to establish a nuclear retreatment plant in Pakistan had set off a big controversy involving the partners in the deal on the one hand and the USA on the other. The French were engaged by Dr. Kissinger's efforts to block the implementation of the agreement. The French made it clear that they did not approve of American attempts to influence the Pakistani decision; they also rejected Dr. Kissinger's suggestion that the proposal be discussed in three-way talks between France, Pakistan and the USA. The French maintained that the agreement concerned their country, Pakistan and the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) alone; there was no room for the USA to intervene.

The French Prime Minister lost no time to assure Pakistani Prime Minister, Z. A. Bhutto, in August that the French were committed to honour the pact seeking setting up of a nuclear retreatment plant in Pakistan. The French Premier was on record as having said : "It is a question of sovereignty. An accord has been signed between France and Pakistan for the delivery of retreatment plant which is governed perfectly satisfactorily by international controls and competent international agency." France, he added, was fully aware of its responsibilities and had abided by "all existing nuclear treaties". As he saw it, the matter was entirely between Paris and Islamabad, and Washington had nothing to do with it. The West Germans had taken a similar attitude towards the arrangement under which Brazil would buy for them a complete nuclear fuel cycle.

It was immediately after the month of August was over that the International Institute for Strategic Studies reported that Pakistan had been buying fighter aircraft, helicopters, submarines and missiles from France. According to the Institute's report (Military Balance 1976-77), China had increased its armed forces by 250,000 and formed three new armoured divisions. It continued the nuclear programme slowly, but a "theatre nuclear force" was operational, capable of reaching large parts of Russia and Asia.

On 27 September 1976, the U.S. Defence Secretary, Donald Ramsfeld, claimed that the Russians "are pushing ahead with an unprecedented missiles programme". He said in Washington that the Russians had more than 1,500 intercontinental range missiles in land bases and more than 800 submarines. This compared with 1,054 U.S. landbased missiles and 656 in submarine launching tubes. He said : "Current trends indicate that by the early 1980s all or most of the existing Russian ICBMs would be replaced with the new generation of missiles". He also estimated that all or most of the current Soviet submarine-launched missiles could be replaced by more advanced weapons by the late 1980s.

Earlier, the prospects of closer India-China relationship were held out in Delhi on 20 September when the Chinese Ambassador, Chen Chaoyuan, presented his credentials to the President of India, Fakhruddin Ali Ahmed. Chen was confident that with the exchange of Ambassadors between the two countries "our relations will further improve". He said he would exert all his efforts "to develop the friendship between the Chinese and Indian peoples and the relations between our two countries". According to Chen, China and India are neighbours with a long history and splendid civilizations. Pointing out that the relations between China and India were good for a period after the establishment of diplomatic relations, he said there were "unfortunately" some set-backs afterwards.

Following the death of Mao Tse-tung, the New China News Agency said in Peking on 14 September that every branch of China's armed forces had pledged to defend and carry forward the national legacy of Mao. They had pledged to "carry on the cause Chairman Mao left behind and, under the guidance of Chairman Mao's line of army building, to continue building the PLA (People's Liberation Army) as a staunch pillar of the dictatorship of the proletariat". The Agency said that this vow was made in messages sent by leading army organisations to the central committee of the Chinese Communist Party. Commanders and soldiers alike acknowledged that the growth of the Chinese army was due to Mao's wise leadership and that without him nothing would have been achieved.

It is not unknown that before and after Mao's death China kept itself engaged in building up its conventional forces. A degree of preparedness against nuclear war has been brought about by Peking. But Peking security strategy has related mainly to the need for modernising China's army. China has the largest army in the world with about 32 lakh 50 thousand persons in it. The personnel of India's army has been put at 789,000 as against 1,825,000 of Soviet Union and 789,000 of the USA. China's army according to Military Balance 1977-78, includes 12 armoured divisions, 121 infantry divisions and 40 artillery divisions. The total personnel of the Chinese navy has been put at 3 lakh

as against 46,000 for India, 450,000 for the USSR and 5,36,000 for the USA. The naval strength of China includes 38,000 Marines and a 30,000-strong naval air force. They have 22 major surface combat ships, 1 G-class submarine, 66 fleet submarines and 10 destroyers. The strength of the Chinese air force is 4 lakh men and about 5,200 combat aircraft. (India : 100,000 men and 670 combat aircraft, USSR : 475,000 men and about 4,600 combat aircraft, USA : 571,000 men and about 3,400 combat aircraft). They include about 80 TU-16 and a few TU-4 medium bombers, about 400 Il-28 and 100 TU-2 light bombers, about 600 MiG-15 and F-9 fighter-bombers and a large fleet of outdated MiG-19s among others.

Intelligence specialists reported in September 1977 that the drive to modernise the Chinese armed forces envisaged, among other things, procuring of advanced level air-to-air missiles, air-to-surface missiles and more sophisticated air-borne radars with look-down capacity. In November, Vice-Premier Wang Chen disclosed that China had decided to buy British Hawker-Harrier military jump-jet.

A big increase in Chinese purchases of aluminium and other strategic metals since the beginning of 1975 has been noted in Peking, Brussels and Japan. The metals are mainly required for expansion of China's military and civil air industry. China has been building huge stocks of manganese and other non-ferrous metals required for her defence industry. China is obviously buying metals in readiness for the construction of her next generation of fighter planes to replace the outdated MiG aircraft.

The fruits of Chinese nuclear power were first realised at Lop Nor, in the Sinkiang desert, on 16 October 1964 when a nuclear device, named "Mao 1", was successfully exploded. Since then China has conducted 22 nuclear explosions. Chinese are gradually pushing ahead with their missiles programme. As of 1976 China's strategic forces included 30 to 40 medium-range ballistic missiles with 600 to 700 miles range and an equal number of intermediate range ballistic missiles with a range of

1,500 to 1,750 miles. China has also developed missiles with the range of 2,400 kms. and 4,000 kms. Some of these missiles have been positioned in Tibet.

In October 1977, the Government of India decided to ban foreign expeditions from the twin peaks of Nun and Kun in Ladakh. The decision became known when the Indian Mountaineering Foundation (IMF), which grants clearance to expeditions, cancelled the permission granted to a Japanese team to climb one of the two peaks in 1978 and asked the team leader, Masato Oki, to choose another peak instead. Government of India was prompted primarily by considerations of national security. On 27 October, two newsmen (B.R.P. Bhaskar and Mohammed Sayeed Mallik), based in Srinagar, were informed that Jammu and Kashmir Government sources were credited with the view that visits to Nun and Kun by foreigners "do not involve any security risks and the Pakistani and Chinese borders are 80 to 200 kilometres away respectively and there are no defence installations in the vicinity of these peaks". Bhaskar and Mallik were not apprised of the report, gathered by a couple of Indian intelligence men, saying that some foreign hikers, who visited Ladakh between July and September 1977, had not confined themselves to the field of trekking alone; they had visited some areas and gathered information of political and defence matters. A diary, seized from a foreigner at a place near Leh in August, was said to have contained information regarding the Indian defence installations. Nun and Kun remained closed to expeditions for more than two decades until 1974 when IMF began booking expeditions to these peaks simultaneously with the opening of Ladakh to Indian and foreign tourists. Apart from Indian civilian and army teams, expeditions from the United States, western and eastern Europe, Australia and Japan attempted the two peaks in 1976 and 1977, some of them successfully. At least two mountain tour operators, one from the United States and the other from West Germany, organised a series of expeditions to these peaks in 1977.

The establishment of a trade link with China in May 1977 marked a step towards gradual restoration of normalcy in

India's relations with China. The development was quite in line with the expectations roused in 1976 when New Delhi and Peking exchanged Ambassadors. If New Delhi took the initiative of sending an Ambassador to China on a reciprocal basis, Peking took the initiative to pave the way for resumption of trade between the two countries, which remained closed for 15 years following the Sino-Indian hostilities in 1962.

A thaw has set in in the relations between China and India. Further progress cannot be possible unless New Delhi and Peking know each other's mind. Neither China nor India will derive desired benefits if they try to make the question of taking the initiative in the matter of improvement of relations an issue of prestige. If China is sincere in building the bridges of friendship with India, then it should desist from conveying vague hints through third countries to be treated as an initiative from Peking. And if India is anxious to get closer to China, then New Delhi should desist from insisting that it is now for China to take the initiative in the matter of improvement of relations with India. True, both sides are free to highlight, or refer to, the political-cum-diplomatic reality of the situation. But in light of internal political compulsions in China what is important for New Delhi is to ensure that it does not rush to citadels ; the Government of India has to be skillful and careful in dealing with the issue and to ensure that its line of action is re-shaped without ignoring events of the past and peculiar character of Chinese diplomacy.

In November, Prime Minister of India, Morarji Desai, ruled out war as a solution of the border dispute between India and China. In an interview to a Japanese newspaper, Desai said that it was a border dispute in the sense that "our territory is in the possession of China as a result of the 1962 operation". Until that was settled, there could not be a complete understanding between the two countries. "We do not want to resolve it by war. We want to resolve it peacefully", he said. On 24 November, India's Minister for External Affairs, A. B. Vajpayee, reiterated his earlier statement in the Lok Sabha that if China took the initiative, India would fully respond in esta-

blishing peaceful bilateral relations. He said : "It is acknowledged by both sides that there exist unresolved differences on the India-China border question. For more than 15 years, the Chinese have been in occupation of Indians territory of approximately 14,500 sq. miles." On 27 November, Vajpayee told newsmen at Ujjain that while there were signs from China indicating its intentions to improve relations with India, there should be no haste in restoring normal relations. The issue was old and had a long background with so many ups and downs.

On 4 December, Morarji Desai received a message of sympathy from the Chairman and Prime Minister of China expressing concern at the heavy loss of life and property in the cyclone-hit areas of India. A day earlier the Chinese news agency, Hsinhua, reported Indian Foreign Minister's statement denouncing the "latest" Rhodesian raids into the refugee camps in Mozambique and quoted the positive part of the statement that "the Government of India is convinced that the indefatigable will of the freedom fighters will prevail, and soon bring an end to the illegal Smith regime leading to independence for the people of Zimbabwe and the establishment of majority rule". Another report of the agency circulated another statement of Vajpayee made in the Rajya Sabha on December 2 reiterating India's support for the Palestinian people's demand for a homeland of their own. On 4 December, the agency again drew attention to Indian Commerce Minister's assertion at a Press conference two days earlier regarding the impressive growth in India's export earnings during the first half of 1977-78 financial year. This showed a spurt of interest about India in China. But the ideological image of India remained unchanged in their minds.

On 12 December, Indian Foreign Minister, Vajpayee, told the Lok Sabha that the Government of India was in favour of settling its border dispute with China through peaceful negotiations. He was replying to a call-attention motion tabled by three Janata Party members on a Radio Peking broadcast that emphasized China's determination to defend its borders and its interpretation in the world press as a warning to India. Vajpayee said India could not but regret that such a statement

should have been made on the Chinese official media, particularly when "we have obtained an improvement in our bilateral relations" with China. He expressed the hope that that the process of improvement in "our relations with China will not be jeopardised by such an incorrect and needlessly provocative statement". Vajpayee said the Government's attention had been drawn to the Radio Peking broadcast of November 27. The broadcast gave an account of the qualities of the Chinese army and in this context referred to China's border clashes with India (October-November 1962), with the USSR (March 1969) and with the then Republic of Vietnam (January 1974). It briefly recapitulated the events of the 1962 Sino-Indian conflict. Vajpayee said the stand of the Government of India on the Sino-Indian border question was well-known. "Our common border is clearly depicted on our maps and the 1961 official report gives ample evidence in support of India's stand vis-a-vis the Sino-Indian border."

China is bigger than India in size and population. And China is militarily stronger than India. Peking has been busy improving its relations with its immediate neighbours since the new leadership came to power in China. Whether this is indicative of China's future line of approach towards India also has yet to be established, as China continues to carry on "hostilities" against India by supporting the rebels in Mizoram and Nagaland, by helping Pakistan on the Kashmir dispute, and by criticising the Indo-Bangladesh agreement on Farakka. China has not abandoned its efforts to exploit possibilities for external expansion. Morarji Desai and his Government in Delhi are not wrong in holding this opinion that there cannot be a complete understanding between India and China unless the question of Indian territory in possession of China is settled. But they should not forget that the other party (China) has always disputed such a claim on the part of Indian spokesmen. When the other party disputes it, the question has to be sorted out as a dispute. Indian leaders, particularly Prime Minister Desai and Minister for External Affairs, Vajpayee, should not only pontificate what China should do to enable India to respond suitably ; they should realize that a dispute is

a dispute and has to be sorted out as a dispute. If in India's dispute with China Desai and his colleagues are unable to display the type of moral courage with which President Sadat pushed ahead in November 1977 to short out the Arab dispute with Israel, then it would be better for them to wait for a congenial atmosphere (which is likely to be brought about by the gradual improvement in trade and cultural relations) to settle the matter later through peaceful negotiations.

It is not unknown that, as part of her strategy for expansion, China has kept her men busy in Pakistan, Nepal, Bhutan and Burma, and has been referring, though not frequently, to Ladakh being a part of Chinese Tibet and to Sikkim's "illegal" merger with the Indian Union. Chinese Communists were reported to have set up their camps at three places on the Pakistani side of the Hunza border following the imposition of martial law in Pakistan on 5th July 1977. Establishment of Chinese camps in Hunza has been against the border agreement of 1963 between Peking and Rawalpindi. An eleven-member Chinese delegation, which was on an eight-day tour of the Gilgit Agency until October 2, spent two days in Hunza valley to take stock of the situation in the wake of deployment of Chinese on the border and setting up of Chinese camps in Hunza.

Indian army chief, General T.N. Raina, visited some forward areas in Ladakh on 12 October during the course of his three-day tour of Kashmir. Intelligence specialists had, that time, put the number of Chinese troops in whole of Tibet at about 3.5 lakhs as against over 2 lakhs in August 1975. Large air bases have already been established by China at about twelve places in Tibet. There are in addition to about half a dozen airstrips built in central and western Tibet. China has raised unspecified number of commandos and infiltrators. Thousands of them have been attached to the units of Chinese People's Liberation Army in Tibet, specially in western Tibet. How effective or otherwise Indian defences on the Ladakh border are, depends not only what the Indians do but also on what the Chinese do on the other side of the mountains. It is true that India has

increased the number of her troops several-fold since 1962. But the gap between the Indian and Chinese military strength is perhaps still sizable. Ladakh is still as formidable and inhospitable as it was in 1962.